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PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION, 1890.

June 3rd, at 8 o'clock, SOMERS CLARKE, Esq., will read a paper on "The Arrangement, Use, and Abuse of Organs."

July	1	...	Lecture at 8 p.m.
"	15	...	F.C.O. Examination (Paper Work) at 10 a.m.
"	16	...	F.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.
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On MONDAY, June 9th, at 8:15 p.m., Mr. H. C. Young, B.A., (Cantab), will read a Paper entitled "The Advantages and Disadvantages of Examinations."
The GENERAL MEETING will be held on THURSDAY, the 26th June, at 7 p.m.
The date of the Next Examination for F.G.O. is fixed for the 29th and 30th July.
J. T. FIELD, Warden. MORETON HAND, Hon. Sec.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

*** MSS. and Letters intended for publication must be addressed to THE EDITOR, 396, Strand, W.C. Rejected MSS. cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped directed envelope.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1890.

FACTS AND COMMENTS.

Mr. Dion Boucicault will be talking, and that is the worst of him—except that he uses words of needless length. It has probably been Mr. Boucicault's fate throughout life to be surrounded by people for the most part not so well educated as himself; and as he is a man of remarkably wide information, he must constantly have been tempted to pose as a kind of cheap Whewell. A cheap Whewell is a terrible thing, and very common in these days; and it is sad to see the brilliant author of so many charming plays causing grief to the judicious as he has caused it, for example, in this week's "New York Dramatic Mirror." He tells us there a good deal about Shakespeare, impressive enough to those unlearned in the Bard, but, alas, to those who have read their Shakespeare very nearly silly. He has studied the poet's tricks and catchwords, it seems; and has prepared—for his own reading only, we are grateful to say—an edition in which are crossed out all passages (and some entire

plays) which the absence of these tricks and catchwords proves to have been written by other members of the firm of playwrights trading as Shakespeare and Co. It would no doubt be interesting to see the notes of a dramatist so expert as Mr. Boucicault on Shakespeare's plays; but his culture and his methods are probably altogether too rough and ready for such delicate work as the discrimination of Elizabethan styles—a work made far more difficult by the astonishing difference in thought and expression between the young Shakespeare and the old.

**

All English readers will join us in sending every good wish across the Atlantic to Mr. Theodore Thomas and Mr. Walter Damrosch, who have just married, the first Miss Rose Fay, and the second Miss Blaine. The marriage of Mr. Thomas, it will be noted, has apparently had a peculiar effect upon certain journalists of New York, who, in their enthusiasm, have forgotten their musical knowledge. At least, in no other way can we account for the fact that in the "American Musician" we find it recorded that at the marriage ceremonial Mr. Clarence Eddy played "Bach's Toccata and Wedding March" as a prelude, and "as a recessional and grand march Beethoven's Fifth Symphony." In America a great many musical and unmusical things are possible; and perhaps they have found somewhere the manuscript of a Toccata and Wedding March by Bach. But what of the C minor Symphony as "a recessional and grand march?" It must have been hard on the guests who wanted to get back to the wedding breakfast. Oh—of course! The reporter wrote his notice of the ceremony *after* he had been to the breakfast.

**

Nor will the admirers of one of the most admirably equipped pianists of to-day be slow in wishing happiness to Mr. Bernhard Stavenhagen, whose approaching marriage with Miss Agnes Denis is announced. Miss Denis is a singer well known in Germany, and it is pleasant to know that we shall before long have an opportunity of judging whether her popularity there be not well founded; inasmuch as she will, during the provincial tour which she will make next autumn with her future husband, sing his *scena* for soprano and orchestra, "Suleika," which is as yet unknown to English audiences.

**

Two opinions are certainly permissible as to Sir Arthur Sullivan's wisdom in choosing the story of "Ivanhoe" for the subject of his grand opera. "Ivanhoe," however attractive a book it may be to schoolboys, is one of the novels which the true lover of Scott does not care to remember. To minds of a certain age, whatever is written about the age of chivalry is invested with glamour and romance; but "Ivanhoe," studied by maturer readers, is seen to be thin and tawdry. Moreover, although an opera written upon it will doubtless mount and dress well, it is difficult to see where Sir Arthur's librettist—or librettists—will find sufficient material for a plot of adequate interest. The passions of the characters in the story are either unreal or repulsive; and where will the composer have a chance for the introduction of his beloved unaccompanied quartet?

**

The "New York Dramatic Mirror" has lately been agitating its *clientèle* with entreaties that the custom should be established of playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the conclusion of every theatrical performance in America. Our contemporary urges that the practice, if it became universal, would have the result of encouraging patriotic enthusiasm and of convincing the hearer of the supreme sovereignty of the American people. The suggestion

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has already been taken up with spirit, many of the leading theatres having agreed to make the performance of the national hymn a permanent feature of all their performances. There can be little doubt of the value of the idea in theory, but we are not sure that there is much practical good in it. Generally speaking, the play-goer, however much he may have been interested in a performance, is anxious to hurry out of the theatre to his carriage, or to catch his last omnibus, and we fear that he does not at such a moment trouble himself much with patriotic thoughts. He keeps them for election time. That, at least, seems to be the way of Englishmen, who are supremely unconscious of the efforts of the theatrical orchestra.

* *

The following letter, which has been addressed by Mr. Elkan Naumburg to the Philharmonic Society of New York, is reprinted here that the generosity of its writer may receive due recognition even in England, and that an example may thereby be set to the charitably disposed amongst our own music-lovers:

New York, April 11, 1890.—To the President and Directors of the Philharmonic Society of New York.—Gentlemen: On the approach of the fiftieth anniversary of your society I deem it but just that the lovers of good music should in some tangible manner show their appreciation of the institution which has done so much to elevate the standard of that art in our city. Permit me, therefore, to subscribe 5,000 dols. toward a permanent fund, the interest of which shall be applied for pensions to retired members. I give said amount to the society for ever, the only condition being that the money is not to be invested in any other securities than those in which the State laws of New York allow New York savings banks to invest. I hope this subscription will form the nucleus of a fund which will assist in remunerating the retired musicians for their past valuable services, and at the same time help the society to fill up the ranks with the best artists. My attorney, Mr. Macgrane Cox, 43, Wall-street, City, will hand over my contribution upon the proper receipt, whenever you are ready to receive the same.—Yours very truly, E. NAUMBURG.

* *

It could be hoped—for his own sake—that Dr. von Bülow were not particularly thin-skinned. That he is irascible is a very well ascertained fact, and if the side of him which he presents to American critics be not pachydermatous, it is to be presumed that he does not altogether appreciate the unkind criticisms of certain of the brotherhood. The "Musical Courier" has doubtless substantial reasons for the bitterness with which it attacks him, although it would be hard to find excuse for our contemporary when it terms him "a venomous little liar," but the following extract, taken from a notice of the concert given by Von Bülow and D'Albert, has at least the appearance of sincerity:—

Mendelssohn's third symphony, called the Scotch, in A minor, opened the programme. Due praise must be accorded the conductor for the nicety of detail and microscopic finish with which he invested his interpretation, but what shall be said of his sometimes absurd and affected phrasing and above all, the ridiculous topsy-turvy of the tempi? The truth of the matter is that Bülow fears he will be considered commonplace if he does anything like anybody else. As a pianist he would have delighted in six fingers; as a conductor he evidently longs for three arms, judging from his violent jerky movements and facial distortions. The first movement of the symphony was taken too slow and the slow movement too fast. This symphony, by no means Mendelssohn's greatest work, received a distinctly sentimental reading from a conductor from whom one would least expect sentimentality.

* *

In spite of the fact that Mr. Robert Buchanan thinks so too, we are of opinion that those people are ill-advised who are agitating for the withdrawal from the London hoardings of the picture of "Zæo." The advertisement is hideous and it is vulgar; reasons which would certainly justify complaints on artistic grounds. But he must indeed be a singularly "nice-minded" person—we use

the phrase in the sense given to it by the famous cynic—who can see in it anything indecent. The picture is a portrait, and if it be indecent the costume of the lady herself must be equally so. The ultra-sensitive agitators have not, however, proposed to take any steps towards suppressing the performance itself. But inconsistency of this kind is natural on the part of such irrational folk, whose doings, accomplished or projected, certainly bode ill to the freedom of healthy art.

* *

The "World" is to be congratulated on the appointment, as its musical critic, of so good a musician and brilliant a writer as Mr. Bernard Shaw, who, as successor to Dr. Louis Engel, will certainly use his power for the advancement of art. *A propos*, it may be supposed that the "Star," with all others who shared its vigorously expressed opinion that the paragraph which recently appeared in our columns concerning the departed critic was undeserved, has found reason to modify its opinion. In this instance the "Star" was neither bright nor particular.

* *

In view of the approaching visit to London of Mr. Krehbiel, the well-known musical critic of New York, it may be interesting to note that the last of the lectures given by him in the Steinway Hall—then used as a place of entertainment for the last time—was on the keyed instruments which preceded the pianoforte. In a highly interesting and lucid style Mr. Krehbiel recounted the various phases through which these instruments had passed from the earliest times until now. Additional value was imparted to the lecture by the musical illustrations given by Mr. Conrad Ansgore. These were the first prelude from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," by J. S. Bach; "The Queen's Command," by Orlando Gibbons; Mozart's Rondo in A minor; the Andante and variations from Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 14, No. 2; and one of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies.

* *

Another boy pianist! This time it is a coloured youth of some eleven or twelve years, who has been discovered in New Orleans, where he played the other day before a small audience of amateurs and critics. His name is Eddie Moore, and his performances are said to be distinguished by considerable individuality and taste, while his technical powers are equally noticeable. Says a certain scribe:—"He has a fondness for Chopin and Gottschalk and all the great classic composers"—which juxtaposition, by the way, shows a catholicity of sympathy more peculiar than commendable.

* *

Mr. Charles Wood, a young composer, who has but recently finished his term of study at the Royal College, is at work on some music for the "Ion" of Euripides, which will be performed at the Cambridge Theatre by the players who were responsible for the production there of Gluck's "Orpheus." Mr. Wood, it will be remembered, a few weeks since, gained the prize offered by the Wind Instrument Chamber Music Society for the best wind quintett.

* *

Herr Stavenhagen has returned from the Rhine Music Festival, where he met with unprecedented success. The "Daily News" of Düsseldorf, May 26, speaks of him thus: "Herr Stavenhagen divided the honours of the evening with Dr. Richter by his performance of the Beethoven Concerto in C minor. If it is the destiny of any *virtuosi* of the present day to put Rubinstein into the shade, we predict that Stavenhagen will do it." We shall not emulate the rash prophecies of our contemporary; but at any rate we are glad to hear of Mr. Stavenhagen's success.

The new number of "The Meister" fully maintains the high level of interest on which the official journal of the Wagner Society should keep. The opening article deals with "Richard Wagner's Youth," and is followed by the second part of "A Study of 'Die Meistersinger,'" which is as lucid and helpful as the early portion. The translation is concluded of "A Pilgrimage to Beethoven," and the editor puts forward a second chapter on Wagner's correspondence with his Dresden friends. A graceful poem by Evelyn Pyne, entitled "A May Song," is also given.

* *

We have received from Messrs. Remington a translation by Mr. H. Sutherland Edwards of Count Tolstoi's famous "Krentzer Sonata." Into the merits of that powerful and sombre book it would here be inappropriate to enter; but we may at least—in the absence of the only Russian scholar on our staff—express our opinion that Mr. Edwards has done his work admirably. The style of the translation is lucid and graceful, and musicians should be glad to make the acquaintance of a work which has created so deep a sensation. The book, it may be said, is published at a shilling, and is handily and neatly "gotten up".

* *

Mr. Joseph Williams is bringing out a cycle of songs by Mr. G. W. L. Marshall-Hall, which is dedicated to the well-known painter, Mr. John Pettie, and to Mrs. Pettie. Many musicians of eminence have subscribed to the guarantee fund which was necessary ere the publication could be effected, among whom are Mr. G. Henschel, Mr. Hamish MacCunn, Signor Randegger, Mr. F. Hartvigson. Such names are a guarantee of Mr. Hall's artistic merit.

* *

It is announced that as Mr. Santley will not be able to arrive in England in time to appear in the grand performance of "St. Paul" at the Crystal Palace on June 21st, Mr. Watkin Mills has accepted an engagement to sing instead of Mr. Santley. Mr. Manns held the first choir rehearsal at Exeter Hall on Friday.

* *

The following dolorous quatrain—the pun is quite unintentional—comes from Chicago:—

"Patti has reached her native Shore,
Her silvery tones we'll hear no more;
Her 'Home, Sweet Home' was dearly sweet—
We spent a 'V' for one back seat."

* *

The programme of the Richter concert of June 30, which will be given in conjunction with the Wagner Society, will include the overture "Die Feen," Elizabeth's air from "Tannhäuser," the Siegfried Idyll, the third scene of Act III. "Die Walküre," and the Symphony in C (MS.). It will be noted that the first and last of these will be then heard for the first time at a Richter concert.

* *

Senor Sarasate will give his first concert of the season in St. James's Hall on Saturday afternoon next. Mdme. Bertha Marx will be the pianist, and Mr. Cusins will conduct the orchestra. Admirers of the Spanish violinist will not omit to notice so interesting an announcement.

* *

Miss Ida Audain, the popular harpist, will give a concert in Princes' Hall on Tuesday evening at eight. The vocalists will be Miss Edith Rose, Miss Eleanor Rees, and Mr. Henry Guy; while solos on the violin and 'cello will be given by Mr. W. H. Eayres.

The programme of Monday's Richter Concert will include Goldmark's "Im Fruhling" overture, Mozart's "Linz" Symphony, the first scene from Act III. of "Siegfried," and the third scene from Act II. of "Götterdämmerung." The vocalists will be Miss Lena Little and Mr. Max Heinrich.

* *

Miss Emmie Finney announces her vocal recital at the Portman Rooms on June 17th, at 3:30, assisted by Mr. Arthur Thompson, Miss Lilly Von Kornatzki, Mr. Gerald Walenn. The conductors will be Signor Luigi Vannuccini and Mr. Cecil Goodall.

* *

Mdme. Marie de Lido's annual concert will take place in the Portman Rooms on June 12, at 3:30. She will be assisted by Miss Marian Mackenzie, Mme. Alphonse de Martin (the Countess Sadowska), Mr. Hirwen Jones, and Mr. Franklin Clive as vocalists, and Messrs. Hans Wessely, Leo Stern, and Urilem Coenen as instrumentalists. Mr. Lewis Waller will also give a recitation.

* *

The Chevalier Charles Oberthur will give a concert in Princes' Hall on this (Saturday) afternoon, at 3:0. Songs will be given by Mme. Fanny Vogri, Mdme. Karin Lindstén, and Mr. Charles Boyd, while assistance is also promised from Mr. Lazarus, Mr. Louis de Reeder, and M. Henri Lütgen. Various compositions by the concert-giver will be put forward, amongst them a trio for harp, violin, and 'cello, and an aria from his cantata, "Lady Jane Grey."

ON THE WAY TO OBER AMMERGAU.

OBER AMMERGAU, MAY 25.

DEAR MR. EDITOR: There have been so many discussions as to the best way of reaching Ober Ammergau for the Passion Play, which takes place every Sunday during this summer, that I think it would not be inopportune if I gave you a short account of what I consider the best way to go to see this wonderful representation in the spirit in which it ought to be seen. To go, as most people prefer, by Munich, and leave the train only at Oberau, is to bring the common-place too nearly in contact with the sacred drama. The associations, of which the play itself is the outcome, must be imbibed slowly, and by degrees, in order to understand the habit of mind of the people who take part in it, as well as of the people of the country, who regard it as a sacrament. The exquisite scenery which inspires such lofty ideas is not a thing to be seen from a train, hastily; and therefore I should advise those who wish to gain any adequate notion of the temper and character of the peasants, whose home it is, to approach Ober Ammergau from Innsbruck in the South. The place itself is well worth a visit, standing as it does in a valley surrounded by big mountains, and being also full of fine ancient buildings. The church contains the splendid sarcophagus of the Emperor Maximilian, surrounded by a sort of Walhalla of gigantic bronze heroes, amongst which the handsomest face and most graceful figure belong to Arthur, King of England. The city tower is of fine proportion, and stands in a place formed by very old buildings, which are supported by thick, round, and vaulted arches. The most striking thing about the public architecture of this part of Austria and Southern Germany is its great solidity as compared with most Continental building—at the same time there is displayed a keen sense of proportion, combined with artistic and original ornamentation.

The journey from Innsbruck to Partenkirchen is taken in a "one horse shay," with the beast harnessed on one side of a central pole. The cost of this stage of about thirty miles is 20 florins, or about £2, which is amply repaid by the scenes of varied interest through which it passes. On first rising out of the valley of the river Inn we arrive at a little village, where our coachman tells us we must get another horse. Having proceeded but three miles, we begin to doubt the stamina of the horses of the country. But no! another horse is yoked to the other side of the pole, and we proceed, accompanied by the owner of the assistant horse, to climb slowly what seems an interminable hill. At every halting place a shrine or crucifix is erected, to which the pious traveller raises his hat reverently.

Our driver urges his animal seldom with whip, but with a peculiar half-falsetto cry, which sounds comic to our northern ears, and surmounting the thickly-wooded country till we arrive at a more open pasture ground, we take leave of our second horse and his owner with polite adieus. Your Bavarian highlander is a gentleman, with the courtly dignity which belongs to a mountain race; there is nothing servile in the manner of his salutations. He is proud of his mountains, their legends, and their history, and right glad is he to welcome any stranger who takes any interest in him and his. As we pass by a small schloss, at the base of a huge overhanging crag, we are told it was the residence of the great Maximilian. The story runs that once, when the Emperor was on a solitary hunting excursion, he got into so "bad" a place that he gave up all hope, and, writing on a piece of paper that he should never return, he wrapped it round a stone, and flung it on to his house below. This attracted the attention of his men, and he was immediately rescued from his dangerous position. The upland ground through which we pass is exceedingly like a well-kept gentleman's park, consisting of velvety grass of the deepest green, interspersed with trees of every sort, but chiefly of the fir tribe, through which the fawn-coloured mild-eyed kine wander at large with tinkling bells attached to their necks. Distant thunder, amid the barren peaks capped with eternal snow, adds a solemn grandeur to the scene. Indeed the snow itself is lying deep in crevices of the rocks a few hundred feet above our heads. The trees, as in most Alpine districts, grow very high up, so that the line of rock and snow is very well defined. Leaving this high undulating plateau, whence peak after peak, crag and point, all glittering with snow, have rejoiced our eyes, we descend to Seefeld, the half-way house, where the inn is covered by the largest, flattest, and most overhanging roof I have ever seen. The lower part of the houses in this country is built of stone or plaster as far as the roof story, which is entirely made of timber, and usually elaborately carved and finished off. Our descent from this place leads us through rolling pasture to Mittenwald, the most picturesque village on the journey. The houses in the main street are placed insteps—or "en échelon," to use a military term—which prevents one feeling the formality of a street. Each dwelling is elaborately adorned with paintings, in singularly delicate colours, of some sacred subject or patron saint, and a tablet on one announces the fact that the immortal Goethe spent a night there on his journey to Italy. The church tower is frescoed similarly in harmonious tints, and is surmounted by a peculiarly graceful cupola of Byzantine shape, so common to this country. To Partenkirchen a further descent must be made, in which place it is best to pass the night. The church contains some of the finest specimens of the old wood carving of Ober Ammergau, in the shape of the twelve stations of the Cross and a carved crucifix of great beauty. From the flat valley in which Partenkirchen stands, a valley so flat as to give the impression of having been formerly an estuary, a severe hill has to be climbed to get to Ettal, the monastery whence the Passion Play is said to have originated. It is of very ancient foundation, and its church possesses a spacious dome so beautifully decorated that one is taken, in spirit, to the land of Italian masters—and yet it was painted by a German in the last century. To plunge from the solitary grandeur of Nature into this noble display of man's art standing solemn amid the everlasting hills is to stir the imagination as few other great contrasts can. This beautiful temple, which would grace any fine city, fixed thus lonely and divested of any dross of earthly vanity, devotes itself to God alone. From this spot, from time immemorial, have thought and religion emanated, to touch and sanctify the life of the country around; and from here has the devotion come of which the Passion Play is the embodiment. No one, indeed, who mingles, or even comes in contact at all with the peasants of Ober Ammergau can fail to see that the earnestness of their faith consists in the consciousness that it is an ancient one, a traditional one, and one which has stood the test of time.

GILBERT COLERIDGE.

Mr. J. J. PADEREWSKI.

Mr. J. J. Paderewski was born in Podolia, a city of Russian Poland, on November 6, 1860. Unaided by the fostering influence of any musical environment, his high talents quickly developed, and he proposed to devote himself entirely to composition. With this view he went, in his twentieth year, to study harmony and composition at Berlin, there receiving his first tuition. It was not until four years later that he decided to become a

pianist, placing himself under Leschetitsky, the well-known husband of Mme. Essipoff. It was at once apparent that he had chosen his right vocation; for within three years Mr. Paderewski had made such rapid progress in his art that on his first appearance in public he was acclaimed as one of the most remarkably gifted of contemporary pianists. Each successive appearance which Mr. Paderewski has made during the short time since elapsed has only served to lift him higher in the estimation of competent judges, and the voices of Continental and English critics are unmistakably unanimous in the expression of the highest hopes for the future of one who has, while still a very young man, proved his right to rank as a great artist. Mr. Paderewski has not on this account ceased to compose, and the results of his efforts in this direction are well worthy of notice. His compositions include a concerto (which will be heard at the orchestral concert shortly to be given), a "Thème varié," an "Album de Mai," and several sets of Polish Dances, besides the popular "Minuet." It may be said that all are very cleverly and brilliantly written, no commonplace harmonies or hackneyed modulations being admitted. Most of them are difficult to render with proper point and at the proper speed, but when adequately played are very charming and characteristic.

POLISH SONG.

BY J. SIKORSKI.

Translated* by NATALIE JANOTHA.

There exists in all nations, and indeed in the heart of almost every individual, the wish to express in sound impressions received. Sometimes even one single sensation may cause a sudden expression, which is repeated in a certain rhythmical order, created by the very nature of the impression. We meet examples of this even among the most uncivilized races; on the other hand, people of the highest culture made use of a sort of prolonged psalmody to render poetry more elevated and beautiful, and by the joint force of two elements, words and music, to carry away and delight the listener. From this fact legends arose of the training of wild beasts, of the moving of stones, of the destruction of Hell's Gates, and so forth. Then, through many transformations, we come to song as it is conceived nowadays: the exquisite fruit of inspired musical art, supported on knowledge, and perfected through many centuries. What was the origin of song? It certainly existed as a necessary attribute of the human spirit, which has, in the voice given to mankind by beneficent Providence—a rich material, capable of much variety, and with the regularity of movement and symmetry of proportion which reigns in all nature (and shows itself even in the circulation of the blood)—afforded us an example of rhythm, forcing us to an involuntary obedience and to an involuntary imitation.

If history could ever record all the musical results of impressions received from the moment human beings appeared on earth until now, it would also show a picture of the development of civilization similar to that which represents the history of literature, of plastic art, of knowledge and science; but we human beings have not been allowed to preserve all the treasures of learning which slowly accumulated during thousands of generations. It was decreed that the artistic results of the earliest ages should be lost to us for ever, and later generations have only bequeathed to us some pottery, found years afterwards by accident.

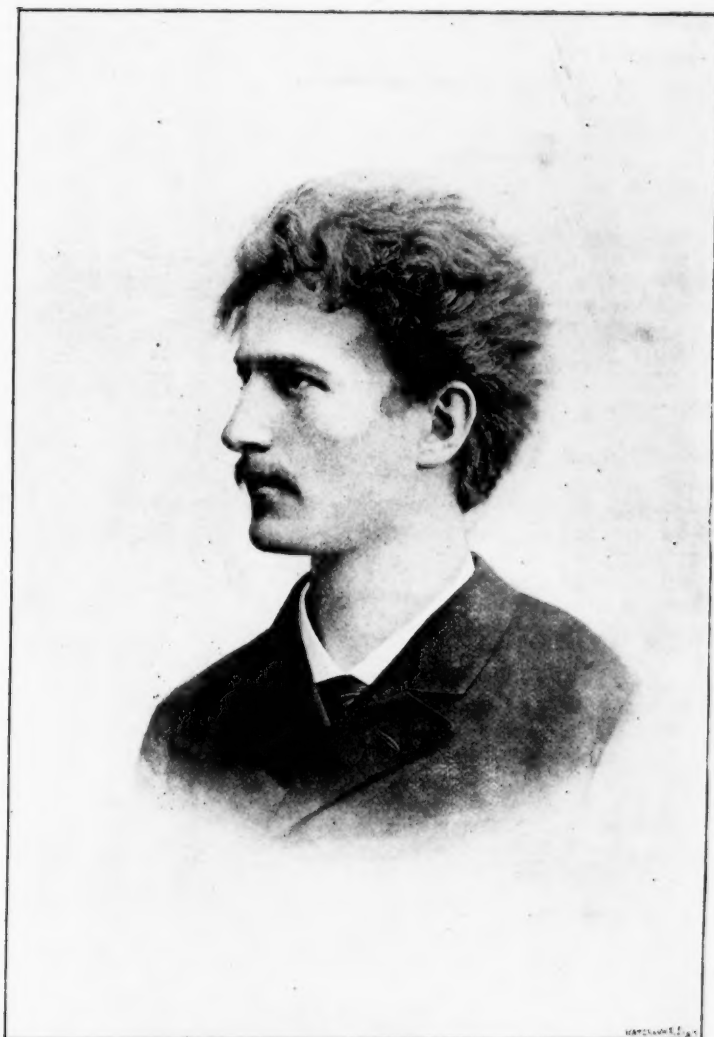
Some traditions disappeared long ago, and some are slowly disappearing still, though emblematical signs remain, which, however, it is difficult, or even impossible to understand. Everywhere there are fragments only—nevertheless very precious, as in them are the proofs of work, of the spirit of art existing for many centuries—of an unceasing toil.

There are also to be detected in song (though with difficulty, because hidden in numerous degrees of transfiguration) changes varying with the necessity of the present moment, and modified by the influence of races and individuals; conceptions, customs, and religious faiths.

Where mankind evolved the idea of realising their spiritual creations by signs traces of ancient song are preserved, but at first only half the idea, the words, was preserved in this way, and the power of inscribing the other half, namely melody, or, to use a more correct word, tune, was not developed till much later, and then and even later still the results were so imperfect that they were almost incomprehensible, and will probably remain so, though the meaning may be open to many interpretations.

It is not therefore astonishing that in every nation the actual beginnings

* Edited by MARION CHAPPELL.



MR. J. J. PADEREWSKI.

From a photograph by KEZIWAUEK, Vienna and Ischl.



of song are almost obliterated, and that its feeble traces remain only in superficial remembrance.

In the first centuries of the Christian era there are chronicles of the Slavs (the nation from whom the Polish race afterwards sprung) giving some idea of the worship which was accorded to those endowed with the gift of song. Ambassadors sent by the Slavs arrived at the Court of the Monarchs in Constantinople, wearing no swords, but with harps in their hands, possibly because this was a national sign of priestly dignity. As changes took place in the political organisation of the nation, and the race grew in power, the position of these bards became of less importance, and at last, after many centuries, they descended into the position of wandering minstrels, who, with their lyres (from whence their name "Lirnik"), traversed the country from end to end, greeted everywhere with respect, and assisted with material help. They took upon themselves the moral care of the people (who were grateful to them for their songs) by relating great deeds of the past—the glory of heroes and worship of the gods and invigorated the spirit of mankind by prophesying (sometimes by means of a sort of mystical ceremony) a better fate in the future, as a help during physical suffering. A great deal of the spirit of the previous pagan priesthood remained in the person of these bards ("Lirnik"), and several songs were transmitted by them to later generations.

Many national Polish songs are certainly derived from this source; for instance, "Marzana Morena," "Goddess of Death" (to whom offerings were made from the fruits of the earth, accompanied by prayers for long life and preservation from disease); and "Lelum-Polelum," called also "Fistum Pofistum," god of the weather, rain, and wind. These songs, though condemned by the clergy, were still being sung in the sixteenth century. The goddess "Lada," source of social order ("Lad" order) and of matrimonial life, was invoked in a wedding song which is sung to this day in Russia.

Song was a necessary accompaniment to the celebration of annual feasts of all kinds, such as the vigil of St. John (24th June), when young girls drop wreaths of flowers into running water, and the men burn fires, and Whit Sunday, when the mountaineers of Tatra, living on Cracovian soil, perform their dances—an annual custom preserved to this day by every Slavonic race which still retains its nationality.

To the list of these customs also belongs the drowning of a straw god (a reminiscence of the drowning of heathen gods at the beginning of the Christian Era), the custom of breaking pots filled with ashes at the neighbour's door at Mid-Lent, and the sprinkling of water over one another (dyngus) by the people on the second day of the Easter Feast. All these ceremonies were accompanied by appropriate songs, which were varied to suit the circumstances and the occasion, and as the singers used always to embody their freshest impressions of the latest events of the day, the text of these national songs underwent continual changes; but the melodies, though modified, invariably possess the same root and character, by which one can always recognise their close relationship to one another. To the influence of the ancient bards must also be ascribed the preservation by the nation, of the memory of those past times when all Slavonic races formed one great nation, and succumbed to a general fate.

From the Cap of Balkan to the Baltic Sea and to the German Ocean of to-day stretched the Slavonic possessions, and the shores of the Adriatic sea are sown with Slavs. The present Illyria, Crain, Bohemia, Moravia (Prussian and Austrian), Silesia, Luzyc (in the kingdom of Prussia), Kaszuby—in a word, all lands intersected by the rivers Dniester, Danube, Vistula, Oder, and Elbe, with the Mecklenburg of to-day, and Holstein, with the Island of Rügen (where the celebrated temple of the heathen god "Swiatowid" existed), and other islands of the German ocean—all were Slavonic. Over this vast surface there are still to be found all those Slav songs which have escaped from the deluge of German, and though they find their outcome in different dialects, they still retain the evidences of their former relationship. The real Poland ceased long ago to stretch to the shores of the Danube, and for several centuries that river has ceased to belong to Poland; hundreds of years ago she lost her sea boundary, and yet in Polish national songs there is often a mention of the Danube, and also of the sea. These songs might almost be called historical, though they do not mention any historical facts, or the names of any men celebrated in past times; yet there is no lack of important historical material.

Chronicles of the time say that Casimir, son of Mieczyslaw II., was taken by his mother (a German), Ryxa, away from his own country during the struggles in which Pagans and Christians were involved, and that when he returned to claim the throne in 1040, the people wishing for peace went out to meet him singing the song "Oh! be welcome dear King"! There is

also to be found a mention of the song of Ludgarda, the daughter of Nicholas, Prince of Kaszuby, who was killed by her husband in 1258.

New facts, effacing the preceding ones, became more or less historical, though the order was not always preserved, and newer and still newer ballads arose, the last century furnishing a great number. There are no wandering minstrels nowadays to spread music all over the country, but the whole nation has become the exponent of melody, not only repeating the songs, but creating fresh ones.

The causes of inspiration have been manifold.

First, there was the federation of Bar (a confederation) of Polish nobles against the Muscovites in 1768, formed in the town of Bar, in Podole, and then the revolution of the whole nation under Thaddeus Kosciuszko, and the outpouring of the Polish legions, full of life and patriotism, into Italy and Spain. Then came the revolution of 1830-31, and afterwards the latest, that of 1861-62, which latter inspired a warlike hymn strongly imbued with the patriotic spirit.

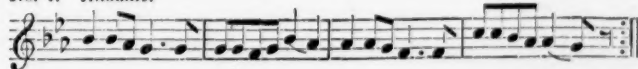
A selection of these national songs was published in Cracow in 1883 under the general title of "Polish Songs," without the music, but with references to the melodies to which they should be sung.

Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (a former companion of Thaddeus Kosciuszko in the American War of Independence, and, later, secretary to the National Government in Warsaw and President of the Society of Sciences there (which was closed in 1831), was the author of "Memories of Songs Connected with the History of Poland." He developed and enriched each subject with his descriptions, and published another work under the title of "Historical Songs." Music is added to each of these songs, with a piano-forte accompaniment. The most beautiful, and almost the best of them, are by Francis Lesla (one of Haydn's three pupils) and by Charles Kurpinski, at that time director at the opera at Warsaw, and author of a great number of works, full of merit, in different branches of the musical art.

Now all these songs are forbidden, especially in those parts of Poland which are under the government of Russia or Prussia; but police orders fruitlessly endeavour to prevent such natural outpourings, which comfort and console the people in their homes, and are used publicly whenever there is an opportunity, even sometimes at mourning ceremonies.

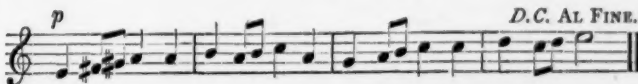
It is impossible to trace the identity of the creators of these melodies, but the authors of the words, especially in more modern times, were among the greatest poets of their day, still living during the reign of the last King of Poland (Stanislaus August Poniatowski), and through a long vista of years till the occurrence of the last political catastrophe. These troubles seem to visit the Polish nation every ten years, changing the whole country into a war camp. Songs written during these stirring times are naturally immensely popular with all classes, though few of them spring from the people. It is strange that the best known of them are just those which, both in the words and in the music, possess a serious and religious character; for instance, (1) "God who during so many centuries," and (2) "With the smoke of the

No. 1. *Andante.*



fire, with the foam of fraternal blood." These songs are sung in preference

No. 2. *Adagio maestoso.*



to others by the people. The author of the former of the two was Archbishop Aloizy Felinski, raised to this dignity in accordance with the Treaty between Russia and the Vatican, and thrown into prison later for refusing to submit to the Government of Great Russia. He was released a few years ago, and is now living in that part of Poland which is under Austrian rule. Felinski's song, written first for the King, became a prayer for the nation. The second one was written by the poet Ujejski.

All this tends to show that in the times of great national sorrow faith in God's care, even through the most desperate trials, and appeals to His help are natural and almost indispensable to human beings, and all the more so with the Polish nation, as in their home-life and in every important public crisis the strong religious feeling which dominates their minds is shown. The Polish clergy have often been known to lead bodies of revolutionists, crucifix in hand, against the enemy, and in the last rising of 1861 the population of Warsaw armed themselves with religious songs against the bayonets of the opposing forces, when even fierce and cruel soldiers hesitated to attack a defenceless crowd praying on their knees. Thus, a great part of the music of the Polish nation consists of religious songs. The one usually considered the most ancient is (3) "Bogarodzica," dedicated to the Mother of God, to whose worship

No. 3. *Largo.*

a great number of religious Polish melodies are consecrated, as the Eternal "Queen of Poland," who was crowned from time to time with great ceremony until the 17th century. Both the words and music of this song were written by St. Wojciech, who was born in 939, and who, as the first Archbishop of Gniezno (the town of Gniezno was the former capital of Polish kings, and is situated in the part of the Grand Duchy of Posen which is joined to Prussia), in trying to make converts to Catholicism among the Prussians (then Gentiles, a race related to the Lithuanians) was killed by them. The Poles went to battle to the sound of this song ("Bogarodzica"), which in form is like the hymns of the Latin Liturgy, but was wonderfully enriched up to the fourteenth century by additions in text and melody, and was used as late as the end of the sixteenth century, in the time of Sigismund the Third and the war with the Muscovites.

The clergy still use it at the Cathedral of Gniezno, and thirty years ago the beggars used to sing it near the walls surrounding the College of Lowicz (seventy miles from Warsaw), which in former days belonged to the Archbishops of Gniezno, and was sometimes their residence. With this exception the song is no longer heard in public; but it was copied from old manuscripts, and is to be found in many literary and musical works. There are also other and similar songs of a religious kind which are widely known, such as the Easter song, (4) "A Joyous Day," &c., which

No. 4.



the chronicles of the thirteenth century cite as being an old song, giving the tenth century—though without verifying their information—as the date of its origin.

(To be continued.)

BERLIOZ ON THE SITUATION.

The following, by Berlioz*, is quite *à propos* during the present pianist-plethora.

CONCERTS.

I should be ungrateful were I not to speak here of the pleasant hours I have passed this winter at Paris, thanks to the givers of concerts. Nearly every day during four months, I have been one of the actors in the following comedy: the theatre represents a study, simply furnished, with an invalid coughing by the corner of his fire-place. Enter two, three, four pianists, and a violinist.

Pianist No. 1 (to the invalid): Sir, I have learnt that you were very poorly. . . .

Pianist No. 2: I have heard, also, that your health. . . .

Pianists Nos. 7 and 9: We have been told that you were seriously ill. . . .

Pianist No. 1: And I come . . . to beg you to be present at my concert which takes place in the *Salle Erard*.

Pianist No. 2: And I have made it my duty to come to ask you . . . to be kind enough to come to hear my new *Etudes* and my Concerto at Pleyel's.

Pianist No. 8: As for me, I have but one motive in coming, my dear friend—the care of your health. You work too much; you must go out, be in the air, divert yourself; I come with the express intention to carry you off. I have a carriage at your door; you must come to my concert at Herz's. Come! come!

The Invalid: When will yours take place?

No. 1: This evening, at eight o'clock.

The Invalid: And yours?

No. 2: This evening, at eight o'clock.

The Invalid: And yours?

No. 8: This evening, at eight o'clock.

The violinist (with a burst of laughter): There are six or seven of them at the same time this evening. And, as I have well foreseen that, according to your custom, not being able to go everywhere, you will go nowhere; and—also—out of discretion, not to disturb you—suffering as you are—I have brought my box; my violin is there. If you will permit me I will play you my new *Caprice* for the fourth string.

The Invalid (aside):

*La peste de la corde, empoisonneur du diable
En eusses tu le cou serré!*

The fact is—and it is a sad one—that concerts in Paris have become pitiful nonsense. There are so many of them; they follow you, beset you, bore you, saw you with such cruel obstinacy, that the proprietor of a large literary *salon* lately had the idea of placing before his door a placard thus conceived: *No concerts are given here*. And, since then, his *salon* abounds with readers and friends of peace who come there to seek shelter.

Since M^{me}. Erard has consented to open her rooms free of cost to the ferocious *virtuosi* wandering at large in Paris, the sale of pianos of her firm has gone down in a deplorable manner, nobody daring any longer to go to her warehouse, either by day or night to examine her instruments, through fear of falling right into a concert under the clutches of one of these lions.

Mark, there are not enough *salons*, *manèges*, *halles*, galleries, to satisfy all concert givers. The rooms of Herz, Pleyel, Erard, Gouffier, St. Cecile, the *Conservatoire*, the Hotel of the Louvre, the Hotels of Osmond, of Valentino, Prado, and of the Théâtre Italien are not sufficient. And, as in despair, several *virtuosi* had commenced to work in the open air in certain new streets, where the noise of the few carriages which pass guarantees badly the inviolability of the ears of the inhabitants, and the proprietors have been obliged to inscribe in large letters over their houses: "*Il est défendu de faire de la musique contre ce mur*."

The inexperienced givers of concerts (innocent ones!) are still spreading over Paris free invitations, which they slip at night under the house doors; and are afterwards astonished to see their hall deserted. It is good here to warn those worthy *virtuosi*, strangers for the most part, arriving from Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Indies, Japan, New Caledonia, Congo, Monaco, San Francisco, Macao, Cuzco, that the audience of a concert is now paid as

* From "*Les Grotesques de la Musique*."

have at all times been paid the chorus, the orchestra, and the *claque*. An audience of six hundred ears costs at least three thousand francs.

One of our benefit-concert givers wished lately to adopt the American custom; that is, to offer with a ticket a cup of chocolate and a slice of cake; but the Parisian auditors, not being in general great eaters, found the compensation insufficient, and, through one of their chiefs, at once asked the *Amphitryon virtuoso*, if it would not be possible to consume the chocolate and the cake without listening to the concert. The *bénéficiaire*, indignant, having replied like the ancient philosopher: "Eat, but listen!" the matter could not be arranged.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

SECOND NOTICE.

It is not easy, when the most prominent works have been dealt with, to select from the remaining mass those which deserve a higher station than their neighbours. Here, by the way, we do not refer to the favourite custom of skying good pictures, it being merely our pleasure to rise to metaphorical diction. Our subject being long, however, our prelude must of necessity be short, and we will, therefore, plunge headlong into a consideration of the pictures, being content for the while even to put aside the journalistic aspect of an Academy notice. Very soon are we roused to interest by the pictures numbered 23 and 24 respectively, the one being Mr. T. T. Rowe's treatment of "The End of the Day," while the other shows us Mr. Kennington's impression of the "Homeless" in our modern Babylon. Curious, indeed, is Mr. Kennington's treatment of his subject, this care-worn starving mother bending over the form of her dying boy. It is terrible in its pathos, in all its ugliness of realism, and we feel that art might well be used as a voice to cry out in that wilderness where fraternity and equality are not, since its accents can be made so fearfully acute as to pierce our very heart-strings. But then the beauty of the work must lie only in the fact which gave it birth, and artistic worth as we now understand the phrase must be ignored. As a moral truth this picture will surely wring the heart of all philanthropy, but to an artist its interest is *nil*, it has no artistic worth. Thankful, indeed, are we when looking up to the sky line we see in Mr. Rowe's "End of the Day" how nature will, with warmth and colour, beautify even the ugly wharves and sheds built up by the man in his most commercial spirit; while it is man himself who leaves a fellow being to starve on his lordly Thames Embankment. There is hope that nature yet may win the day and make earth beautiful in spite of man. In the second room there is a corner of a Spanish Garden, by Mr. Frank Hind (No. 108), a decorative little piece in which the wealth of pink roses and the red-tiled pathway which marks the border of a quiet pool, form a pleasant contrast with the bluish tones of the old grey wall. Here, too, we pass by "Our Village" (No. 148), Professor Herkomer's impression of Bushey, with the remark that it possesses that quality which Ruskin declares necessary for the success of an Academy picture. "In Peaceful Days" (No. 152), though less successful than other works we have seen by Yeend King, owing to some hardness of colour, has yet a greater appearance of truth and shows more real artistic impulse in the painter. Again advancing, we meet with "Bosham" (No. 210), by Moffat Lindner. We have found more transparency in his skies, but the picture in question is not lacking in space, and there is colour of a warm and restful kind in the brown line of roofs, the length of which is broken by the steeple of an unpretending little church, in the pearly blue water, and in the dark mud banks on the left which run into the horizon, catching a glow from the sunset sky. In this same third room are Peppercorn's "Evening" and "The Stream" (Nos. 283 and 289 respectively). There is feeling in both pictures, but the first appears more dirty in its darkness than any we remember to have seen by this painter. The splendid record of the stream shows clearly the naturalistic nature of Mr. Peppercorn's art. At first the sloping mass of dark green foliage strikes us as being too broad, yet we discover in it bit by bit some wonderful gradations of tint; we notice also how the willows in the foreground catch the grey light on the highest branches; then the warm, bright spot where the grass is yellowed by a solitary ray becomes apparent; and we end by seeing how carefully the painter has studied and recorded all the details of the scene. This is as it should be; Nature does not at first sight fling a crowd of mapped-out details into the eyes of her admirers; it is only on examination that they become visible, and the charm of a landscape is from

this reason inexhaustible; there is ever something fresh to be discovered. "The Pontine Marshes" (No. 326), by Mildred F. Drage, should be noticed. The brush was not, perhaps, quite equal to the subject; the conception, however, is remarkable, and far removed from that of the lady amateur. "Oast Houses, Kent," painted by Mr. J. L. Pickering, in a low key and on a small canvas, appears true and is not without beauty; while of the study of "Linda," which hangs close by (No. 383), in the fourth room, we should like to write at some length. Alas! we have little more space than will suffice to say that the work is not suited to the Academy, as there is too much idea in too simple a subject, a fault never forgiven by an Academy public. The child's hair is very red and the background very blue, but the result is by no means hideous to an eye educated in the true value of colour. The spray of yellow and white chrysanthemums which appear to spring from her hands, so delicately are they painted, and the wondrous expression in the depths of her dark eyes, should excuse much redder hair and much bluer background if necessary. Nelson Dawson is well to the fore in the same room with a naturalistic study of an incident of "A Perilous Calling" (No. 394). In this, as in all Mr. Dawson's work, there is motion. The smack, which is coming towards the spectator on a heavily swelling sea, actually appears to move, and we expect at each moment that the wave will sweep round the waterline, which is now well above its level. The stream of light reflected from the water, broken by the dark mass of the boat, forms a good subject, in the treatment of which colour is not wanting. Noticing on our way Mr. Yglesias' charming glimpse of "The Fen Country" (No. 422), we come on the other side to the "Watts" picture, "A Patient Life of Unrewarded Toil" (No. 437). Mr. Watts' manner of telling his story is invariably superior to that generally employed. His words as it were are few, but their meaning is much. Here we have for a subject an old grey horse, quietly ruminating amid his surroundings of bramble, bush, and fern. No particularly attractive form has he; he was never thorough bred, yet the interest that he arouses will be found wonderfully deep. Pre-Raphaelite almost is the work; and there is a truth in every touch, from the daisies in the foreground to the topmost twigs of the bramble brush behind, or those of the taller trees which stand out against the sky. In the next room we find a gem in Mr. Swan's "Piping Fisher Boy" (No. 465), a classic gem cut with unusual art. The "Conversion of St. Hubert," by Arthur Lemon (No. 470), is also the work of one whose art is based on simplicity, whereby a dignity is gained which does not characterise too much of the work of the period. None but a painter with real artistic instinct would have told the story in so quiet a manner, relying for the interest upon its breadth. The horse, the figure of the dismounted huntsman, and the stag, contrast in colour with the sky and the broad belt of foliage which screens the middle distance, and all is said. There is some good painting, too, in Mr. Fred Hall's "Porlock" (No. 511), on the opposite wall. The work is skied, but the distance from the spectator is not too great, and the colour in the picture glows warmly enough even from the top line. The sixth room is chiefly occupied with a gigantic record of "The Death of Cleopatra" (No. 551). The subject is a big one, treated on a large scale. The form of Cleopatra robs the statues of their dignity by cutting up the canvas, and is in itself not sufficiently beautiful to give reason for its being painted. But it is easy to find fault, and we would rather look out for the smaller works which may repay inspection. Hidden away in a corner of the room is Mr. Swan's "Lioness defending her cubs" (No. 614), in which there is even more mastery than in the picture of the lioness at the Grosvenor. The expression in the heads of the two cubs who cling to their mother is marvelously true, and the whole group is instinct with life. By the way, Mr. A. T. Nowell's "Lucerne" should be looked at. The number is 554. The hot crimson glow of the huge cloud mass which crosses the picture would suggest exaggeration, but the painting of the lakeside landscape, just under the rising moon, should answer for the truth of the whole. Thanking Mr. Sargent for his idea in the pictorial treatment of the portrait of Mrs. K., No. 652, in which there is some extremely clever if slightly *bizarre* painting, we pass on, with a glance at Dudley Hardy's able but unlovely study of a dock strike meeting, to Mr. Lavery's "Bridge at Gretz," No. 679. This is not only one of the best pictures we have yet mentioned, but it is the best that Mr. Lavery contributes this year. The painting is broad and masterly. The quietly flowing river with its cool tree shadows, the low stone bridge and the two boats with their occupants, lead us far from Burlington House, and the inclination to watch the oarsman's next stroke is almost irresistible. This seventh room also contains Mr. Peppercorn's "Lake," No. 692, a work which in its glowing colour

of grass and sky almost reminds one of Daubigny, and no less of nature herself. "Tulip Culture" has afforded a subject to Mr. Hitchcock, and the treatment of it (distinguished as No. 750) is natural and decidedly artistic. Objections might be raised against the horizontal bands of colour which cross the picture, yet with all this contravention of the rules of composition, and with the aid of some delicately painted trees under a good light sky, a picture has been produced well worth the efforts expended upon it. Again a melancholy theme is there in Mr. Chevalier Tayler's "Last Blessing," No. 758, and the excellent handling hardly atones for the choice of a subject rather miserable than pathetic in its character. "Leigh Green," by Mr. Ernest Hodges, No. 837 in the ninth room, appears true, but is cold in colour, which latter remark would not apply to Mr. Stott's "Bathers," No. 842. Comical little fellows are they with their huge heads and skimpy limbs, and queer is the drawing of the green bank at the side, but the glow of colour is delightful, although this work rouses the ready derision of the average Philistine. Mr. Laidlay's "Moonrise after the Storm," No. 881, is a fine piece of work, and Mr. T. F. Goodall's "Little Runaway," as is the title of his landscape brilliant with sunlight, deserves much praise. In the same room also there is "Twilight," by Mr. C. W. Wyllie (No. 888); and a picture of some geese, a sloping green, and a farm house with a long title, by M. R. Jones (No. 906), which should not be overlooked. Mr. Logsdail's "Ninth of November" (No. 1,028) may be useful to some future historian treating of London customs, as its details appear scrupulously correct. The subject is not one to inspire poetical treatment, and is therefore dealt with in a clever, plain, matter of fact manner. There is space in David Murray's "Young Wheat" (No. 1,000), and Mr. Fantin Latour's "Première Scène du Rheingold" (No. 1,109), will attract a musical spectator. It is French and Fantin Latour, which is as much as we can say. Mr. Jacob Hood's "Witches' Dance," (No. 1,166) is an uncanny subject treated with vigour. There is motion expressed all through the circle of "unco" beings who are madly tearing round the flame, the result of some unholy incantation. The colour, too, is of a creepy kind. Among the few water colours there is little to attract, and of the sculpture we would fight shy. It is never easy to criticise this, and the conditions under which it is here seen double the difficulty of the task.

CHARLES GOUNOD.

An interesting volume, entitled "Charles Gounod, sa vie et ses œuvres," written by Louis Pagnerre, and published by L. Sauvaire (Paris), has just appeared. The composer, so we are told in the preface, has promised to follow the example of Berlioz and write his *Mémoires*. If this be realised M. Pagnerre considers that his "modeste étude" will vanish before so interesting and curious an autobiography. Meanwhile we have this volume, and a biography in hand may be worth two autobiographies in the bush. Now that Gounod's name is a magic word it is curious to read how in 1844 he tried in vain to induce two *éditeurs* to publish his "Vallon," "Le Soir," and "Jésus de Nazareth." "Very pretty, very pretty," said they, "but the style is too elevated: the songs would not sell."

Gounod wrote incidental music for "Ulysse," a five-act tragedy, produced at the Théâtre-Français in 1852. On that occasion Offenbach was conductor of the orchestra. "Gounod and Offenbach!" says M. Pagnerre. "A strange contrast, and one which will make many of my readers smile." Musical buffoonery was always distasteful to Gounod, and while recognising Offenbach's talent he strongly disapproved of the use which he made of it. This juxtaposition of names is therefore curious. Offenbach, twenty-one years later, conducted also the "Jeanne d'Arc" when it was given at the Gaité.

A chapter is devoted to Gounod as a writer. In 1874, when discussion arose respecting the modifications which Wagner proposed to make in the score of the Choral Symphony, Gounod wrote a letter addressed to M. Oscar Comettant, musical critic of the *Siècle*, in which occurs the following:—

"I do not know the 9th Symphony of Beethoven according to Wagner. I only know it according to Beethoven, and I confess that it is sufficient for me."

Just indeed to Beethoven, but scarcely so to Wagner: he condemns the latter even without hearing him. Gounod is not, as one might think from this extract, hostile to Wagner. He greatly admires his genius, and when Tannhäuser was hissed off the Paris stage in 1861 he prophesied that in

ten years the French public would take off its hat to the man and to his work.

There is a long chapter about "Faust," and very full details are given with respect to the early history of this now popular work. Many were the difficulties attending its production. First of all there were rehearsals lasting six months, during which changes and cuts were made. For example, in the second act a trio between Faust, Siebel, and Wagner was omitted, and also, in the third act, a duet between Marguerite and Valentine. The Church scene was from the beginning a serious stumbling-block: the censorship was offended at the sight of Satan on the stage, behind a pillar of the cathedral. The scene, indeed, was only saved by the intervention of the papal nuncio, Monseigneur de Ségur. Then at the last moment the tenor, Guardi, was unable to sing, and a substitute had to be found. And again the work was received without enthusiasm. It is perhaps well to remind our readers that the "Faust" of that time was performed as an *opéra comique*, i.e., with spoken dialogue. The first act was pretty much the same as now, but in the second the music ceased after the *Kermesse* until Mephistopheles' song, "Le Veau d'or," and again, in the third act, there was much dialogue. The fourth act included three *tableaux*: Marguerite's room, the public square, and the interior of the church. Now, on the stage the Church scene comes before the soldiers' chorus and the death of Valentine. The composer, in a letter addressed to the *chef d'orchestre* of the theatre of Port-Mahon, has clearly expressed his opinion with regard to this matter. He says:—

"Monsieur le Maestro:

"... The dramatic order observed by Goethe requires the scene of the death of Valentine to precede that of the Church, and thus have I conceived my work. However, certain considerations connected with the *mise en scène* have caused this order to be inverted, and now at the Grand Opera the fourth act concludes with the death of Valentine. There is the advantage of an act ending with musical masses instead of a scene for two personages.

"CH. GOUNOD."

The one thing which saved the opera at its production was the soldiers' chorus. "How fine! What colour! How thoroughly German!" cried the public. "And yet," says M. Pagnerre, "this chorus was not a song of German warriors, but a song of Cossack soldiers, forming part of an opera written to a libretto by H. Trianon, and entitled "Yvan de Russie or Yvan le Terrible." After seven performances of "Faust" had been given no one made an offer for the performing right. M. Choudens, after much hesitation, acquired the right for France and Belgium. At first he did not like the work at all, and our author tells us that when his children were naughty Choudens used to threaten to take them to see Gounod's opera.

Among the criticisms of the day that of Berlioz in the "Journal des Débats" occupies a foremost place. He admired the work very much; the garden scene he considered *le chef d'œuvre de la partition*. He objected, however, to the imitation of the noise of the spinning-wheel in Marguerite's romance. Schubert, he says, can be excused in a song not intended for the stage for recalling the spinning-wheel, which one could not see. But in the opera one sees it; Marguerite is really working it: the imitation is therefore not in any way necessary." This appears, indeed, somewhat hypercritical.

Let us add a word about the *tragédie-drame*, "Jeanne d'Arc," which is to be heard this season in London. It was produced in Paris in 1873. The score included some symphonic movements, choruses, a *ballet*, and two songs. For the revival of the work at the theatre of the Porte-Saint-Martin with Sarah Bernhardt at the beginning of this year some changes were made in the score: the *ballet* and two choruses were cut out.

On the last page of his book M. Pagnerre sums the composer up as follows:—

"Gounod entered upon artistic life at an epoch already distant from us. Since his first appearance great things have been accomplished: Wagner has forced himself on France, and his works, so different from those of Gounod, have produced in our country a strong and lasting impression. Has Gounod been affected by this revolution in musical art? Has he changed his manner? Has he followed new tendencies? No. He accomplished his work by his nature, and his work is intact. While following the Wagnerian movement he has preserved his musical convictions. He has not stumbled. Everywhere, and in spite of everything, Gounod has continued to write Gounod music; and the public, both in France and Germany, has remained faithful to him. Whatever judgment posterity may have in store for him the author of "Faust" will have thrown a luminous ray on our contemporaneous art which will give to him a place apart among the great musicians.

Very complete details are given in this volume respecting all Gounod's compositions, and the life of the composer is told at considerable length.

The Dramatic World.

"OLIVIA."—"QUEEN'S COUNSEL."—"A NEW WING."

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 28TH MAY, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMOUSE,—

When one is inclined to be a bit downhearted about the British drama—and one sometimes is, you know—such a performance as that of "Olivia" at the Lyceum is wonderfully cheering. "Caste" and "Clancarty," and after them "Olivia"—here are three plays brought out during the last twenty years of which any theatre might be proud: nor has the youngest of the three ever been played better—perhaps never so well, as it now is at the Lyceum. This is a performance not to be equalled at the Français, because the Français has no Ellen Terry. My own belief, as you know, is that in truth there has never been another Ellen Terry: that she is one of those artists so great, in a special line, as to be truly called incomparable. In the parts which she has made her own I do not believe that she has ever been, or ever will be, rivalled; and of these parts Olivia is perhaps that in which she is greatest.

Her power seems to me to lie in the perfect comprehension and expression of the poetry, the pathos, the buoyancy, and the fun of girlishness: "all that we connote by the term girl"—to quote a literary boy whom I once suffered under—is embodied with imperishable freshness and charm in the heroines of Ellen Terry. Her Olivia lacks nothing—it has the dignity of maidenhood as well as its frolic, the motherly love of the eldest sister for the little ones as well as the girl's perfect reverence and trust in her father. There is only one moment in the play—when the girl is changed to an outraged woman and strikes her wronger—in which Miss Terry lacks strength and reality.

The keynote of the whole drama, as it is played at the Lyceum, is the immense, unbounded love of the father and daughter. In any play where love of children, great or small, has to be shown, Mr. Irving is sure to be at his very best: judge, then, with what a wonderful tenderness he plays this father, whose love for his beautiful girl fills his whole being. Hardly any other stage-picture that I remember has such deep and true humanity as this one of the father and daughter, ever clasped in each other's arms—of Olivia coming like a little child to bury her sorrows in her dear father's breast, of the good Dr. Primrose sheltering his one ewe-lamb and leading her back to the fold. Nothing can give one a truer measure of Mr. Irving's art than to see him—as I have this week—on two following evenings in "The Bells" and "Olivia." The dignity, the humour, the sweetness of his Vicar of Wakefield—not Goldsmith's, I own, but Wills's—are as perfect as the *finesse*, the imagination, the savage power with which he plays Mathias.

And the mannerisms—the celebrated Irving mannerisms, of which one has heard (and, I admit, seen) so much? It is, perhaps, their strongest condemnation to say that they do not exist in Mathias, that they are hardly felt in Dr. Primrose. No; these parts, and Louis, and Digby Grant, and much of that magnificent Hamlet—every part, indeed, in which Mr. Irving is at his very best—one may praise without any kind of reserve.

And, besides Mr. Irving the actor, there is Mr. Irving the stage-manager. How perfectly this whole play is arranged and acted: never before, I think—and I have the clearest remembrance of the famous first night at the Court, twelve years ago, and of the first run at the Lyceum—never quite so perfectly as now. Admirable as were Mr. Hermann Vezin and Mr. Frank Archer as the Vicar

and Burchell, the entire performance is even better now; and the larger stage adds dignity to a play so broadly planned and written.

Mr. William Terriss is, as of old, an ideal Squire Thornhill; the rough work of the Adelphi has not a jot unfitted him for the great theatre in which his place had, since he left, never quite been filled. Mr. Macklin, too, is thoroughly well placed as Burchell; his solid manliness of style is exactly the right thing for the utterer of that famous "Fudge!" of which Mr. Wills has most unjustly deprived us. (One little thing I could never understand; and this was, why Mr. Irving's exquisite tact had not made him feel that Burchell in the third act would not need to be *told* to leave father and child alone in their first meeting.)

And it is impossible, I am sure, to over-estimate the value to the play of Miss Pauncefort's perfect Mrs. Primrose; it is so exactly in keeping, where one touch too much would have been fatal. Among the smaller parts, Mr. Tyars makes his Gipsy as picturesque and real as ever; Miss Annie Irish is a charming Sophia, Mr. Gordon Craig a pleasant Moses, and Mr. Howe a firm and natural Flamborough; only the Polly Flamborough might be better.

Of the play I will not speak: it is too late to criticise it unless at much greater length than I have time for just now (or you patience?), as its author's masterpiece. Its one fault—the Vicar's reception of the news that his daughter is really married—struck me last night as unpleasantly as ever: and the second Act, perhaps a little slowly played, seemed over long; but the play as a whole was sheer enjoyment. The third Act—which, like most of the play, owes next to nothing to Goldsmith—is perhaps the masterpiece of our modern stage; and its construction is of monumental simplicity. The act consists merely of four great scenes immediately following each other, without a word of padding. Let the young dramatist take note thereof!

And then let him go to the Comedy and sedulously study what to avoid. There he shall see—as you, dear Mr. Fieldmouse, I am sure will not, for I cannot believe that you will travel from Buckinghamshire to behold "Queen's Counsel"—but he shall see, played by a company of little note, amid scenery marvellous-ill-favoured, a poor translation of a French farce of a kind now much out of fashion and never at all suited for the English stage. Sardou's "Les Pommes du Voisin" is amusing reading, I allow, but its extravagance is French extravagance, even at its best hardly comprehended by our more stolid British playgoer. One could but be sorry for the actors, and much sorrier for their audience. Mr. E. M. Robson, ill at ease in the first part of the play, had one or two strong moments in the third Act; Mr. Maurice was natural, though not particularly well fitted with a part; Messrs. Julian Cross and Lugg were very fairly funny as a Dutchman (named Blizzard!) and an Irishman; and Miss Lydia Cowell played a very small part brightly. But Miss Marie Lewes's qualifications for the heroine were only a charming figure and a strong American accent.

Wide as the poles asunder from "Queen's Counsel" was a new piece produced at a *matinée* on Tuesday at the Strand Theatre: a piece entirely original, and not merely English but amusing. Allow me to introduce to you a new author, Mr. H. Arthur Kennedy, who can not only write dialogue uncommonly fresh and humorous, but can study and invent character, and put it on the stage when he has studied it. Also—which in the case of an author presumably inexperienced is a great matter—he can construct a plot, had he but a plot to construct. "A New Wing" is perhaps too slight in story to fill a theatre for a run—and perhaps not; this only actual experiment can tell. But, in originality and brilliancy, it is worth a hundred "Our Flats," as the public may quite possibly have the good taste to see. Its chief part was excellently, if

almost too broadly, played by Mr. Collette; a character of quiet comedy was excellently conceived by Mr. Herbert Ross; and Mr. Frank Gillmore was very pleasant and promising as the hero. Miss Gertrude Lovel looked pretty, but too evidently lacked experience. Before "A New Wing" was acted a kind of Landorian Imaginary Conversation of Ancient Britons, "A Throw of the Dice," also by Mr. Kennedy. This was well written, but not a play.

(I think that last remark was meant for an epigram of the *ce n'est pas la guerre* type; but it missed fire, so I will conclude—remaining, for the moment, your disappointed

MUS IN URBE.)

THE DRAMATISTS.

XXXVI.—GOLDONI.

After a century almost barren of good work, Goldoni came, and with him the beginning of true Italian comedy. Throughout the 17th century there had been nothing but feeble imitations of the pastorals of Tasso and Guarini, operas, and *commedie dell'arte*—farces of which the authors wrote only the plot, and the dialogue was improvised by the actors. The characters in all these farces were for the most part the same, even in name; there was a stock of traditional personages, Pantalone, the old man, Arlecchino, his clownish servant, Leandro, the lover, and Colombina, his sweetheart and the daughter of Pantalone. The same actor played the same part in play after play, dressed in the same clothes, and always wearing a black mask over half his face; and each of the principal comic characters spoke in the dialect of some Italian city—Pantalone was a Venetian, and Brighella, the knavish valet, a Bergamese. As lately as twenty years ago some faint survival of the traditional plot of these plays might be found in the harlequinade of an English pantomime—Pantalone the father and the Clown his servant chased through several scenes the runaway lovers, Columbine and Harlequin (promoted from his former rôle of buffoon).

Even Goldoni, though he brought back to favour written comedies, was often obliged to employ the "masks," as they were called; and very frequently in his later plays compromised the matter by allowing impromptu dialogues for Arlecchino and Brighella to come between the graver or more elaborate scenes of his plays.

It is often the fate of a reformer to use his strength in mere reforming, so that his works in themselves are of no lasting value, and after a century little remains of him but the name, and of course the later result of his reforms. Goldoni was unfortunate in another way: though his works are still to a certain extent read, and some of them acted, his influence did little to produce masterpieces of Italian comedy. None of his successors, to this day, have nearly rivalled him; indeed, almost the only name which lives besides his own in the comic theatre of Italy is that of his opponent, Carlo Gozzi, who tried to revive the splendour of the masks.

But Carlo Goldoni, whose life covers almost the whole of the eighteenth century—from 1707 to 1793—during a great part of this time kept up the life of the Italian stage with his own inexhaustible pen. The son of well-to-do parents, and brought up to the Bar—after a short, fruitless study of medicine—he divided several years between the law and the drama, succeeding brilliantly at both: then he devoted himself entirely to the reform of comedy in his native land: after a brave and successful fight he went, when he was fifty-four, on a visit to the country of Molière: and there lived for more than thirty years, and died, soon after the outbreaking of the French Revolution.

There are few dramatists whom we know so well as the three who were famous in Italy a hundred years ago, for all three have painted their portraits in their memoirs—the charming, light-hearted Goldoni, the ardent patriot Alfieri, and Carlo Gozzi, the scoundrelly aristocrat. Gibbon thought the memoirs of Goldoni more comic than his best comedies; and they are indeed full of the true Italian brightness, full of fun, and—for a man who had had enemies—remarkably free from bitterness.

The man had a talent for being happy, and we feel it in his plays as in his life. His tastes were simple and his industry amazing; of his private life—after an early love affair or two—the chief facts are an extremely happy marriage and a regular habit of going to bed at 10 o'clock. Given

these facts, he seems to have undertaken to enjoy life in any position, with any surroundings. After his early struggles towards the theatre—he wrote his first play when he was eight years old—and their success while he was yet young, he did not much mind whether he was making fame and money at the Bar, or spending more than he earned as Consul at Venice, or fighting with dishonest managers and conservative opponents of his reforms, or teaching Italian at the French Court, or losing his modest pension in the Revolution (to be restored almost at once, fortunately): always he met trouble with a smiling face, and worked with incessant energy.

No dramatists, except the miraculous Spaniards, have rivalled Goldoni in productiveness: none can have surpassed him in versatility, for he wrote quite impartially tragedy, tragicomedy, drama, melodrama, opera serious or comic, comedy of intrigue, and comedy of character—not to mention his numberless *commedie dell'arte* nor the comedies he wrote in French, of which one, at least, "Le Bourru Bienfaisant," met with complete success in the city of Molière.

His plays are like his character: light, ingenious, rapid, with no very deep insight into human nature, and no passion of any kind. They expressed one side of the Italian nature, just as the tragedies of his younger contemporary, Alfieri, expressed another.

THE ANCIENT GREEK STAGE.

In a paper on "Scene Painting," in a recent number of the "Journal of Decorative Art," Mr. Henry L. Benwell makes some interesting remarks concerning the stage arrangements of the ancient Greeks, who, in his phrase, "over 2,000 years ago were the first to invent and use theatrical scenery and stage effects." The machinery beneath the stage was both elaborate and ingenious. The first scene was painted by a Greek named Agatharchus for one of Æschylus's plays.* This Agatharchus was a self-taught artist, and the story goes that he was detained forcibly by one Alcibiades, who would not let him go until he painted a certain picture, and it was whilst thus detained that he invented the painting of stage pictures† and other ornaments for pomp and show. Be this as it may, the unanimous verdict of antiquity is that devices were first introduced upon the Attic stage by Æschylus. The scenery of the Athenian stage doubtless corresponded to the magnificence of the theatre. The catalogue which Julius Pollux has left us indicates great variety of devices and much ingenuity of contrivance, although it is very hard to comprehend his obscure descriptions. To produce transformations before the eyes of the audience various means were devised, decorations were introduced in front of the stone buildings, which masked them from view, and substituted a scene suitable to the play. These were formed of woodwork below, and above by paintings on canvas, so arranged on perspective principles as to produce the desired scenic illusions. The stage machinery seems to have comprehended all that modern ingenuity has devised. As the intercourse between earth and heaven is very frequent in the mythological dramas of the Greeks, the number of aerial contrivances was proportionally great. Where the deities had to be shown in converse aloft there was a wooden platform surrounded and concealed by clouds. Were gods or heroes to be seen passing through the void of the sky, there was a set of ropes which, suspended from the upper part of the proscenium front, served to support and convey the celestial beings heavenwards. Again, there was a species of crane turning on a point, with a suspender attached, and placed on the right, or country side of the stage, and employed to suddenly dart out a god or a hero, and there keep him hovering in the air till his part was performed, and then as suddenly withdraw him. There was also a similar contrivance made to catch up persons from the earth and rapidly whirl them within the circle of scenic clouds.

These appliances were much used by Æschylus; in the "Prometheus" he not only introduces Oceanus on a griffin in mid air, but also the whole chorus of the Oceanides, consisting of fifteen persons at least, in a winged chariot. There were also traps in the stage, for the crash or conflagration of a building. Such, then, was the origin of scenic effects and stage pictures, which occurred at a period when England was slumbering in a barbarous and uncivilized state; and then, for many years after the decline of the Attic stage, comes a dismal blank.

* See "Vitruvius on Architecture."

† See "Plutarch's Life of Alcibiades."

NOTES AND NEWS.

"A Riverside Story," produced at the Haymarket on the afternoon of Thursday, the 22nd, was a fortunate little play in one respect: it had the good luck to be written by Mrs. Bancroft. Therefore it was acted by such a cast as is seldom seen in a two-act piece at a *matinée*: it was rehearsed carefully and beautifully mounted: and it was received with a chorus of approval by audience and press. It was also lucky in its author, no doubt, because of the bright sayings and pretty natural touches which Marie Wilton could not help giving us now and again: but this piece of luck was balanced by the fact that, because it was written by the famous manageress, it was acted—one cannot doubt—with a reverential absence of preliminary cutting and criticism. There's a divinity doth hedge a manager, hardly guessed at by the outer world; and when he writes a play not even the boldest of stage-directors or of "star" actors dares to suggest that it is talky.

But "A Riverside Story" was talky, though pretty. The first act played well over an hour, and nothing much happened in it; the second was shorter but less eventful. Fortunately, however, such actors as Messrs. Leonard Boyne, Giddens, and Sydney Brough, and such actresses as Misses Kate Rorke, Rose Leclercq, Annie Hughes and Kate Phillips, Mrs. Brooke, and a crowd of pretty girls, made one forget the forward-flowing tide of time, which, as has been said, cast up now and then some sparkling little jewel of Wiltonian speech. So we applauded, and were glad when the well-remembered little round figure came and bobbed its acknowledgments upon the stage.

Circumstances over which they have no control compel the best of playgoers—those, that is, who fill the pit and gallery—to be in time for the first pieces, disdainfully tossed to them by careless managements, if they want to get good places for the comedy or drama of the night. Thus they get a good deal more for their money than the languid stalls and late-dining private boxes; and now and then—but rarely—they gain in quality as well as in quantity. Mr. Irving, in this matter as in so many others, sets a good example; lately, for instance, before "The Bells" and its wonderful Matthias, he has given early comers that delightful little Scotch piece called "Cramond Brig"—otherwise "The King and the Miller"—a jewel of simple humour in a quaint old fashioned setting. Mounted as are the least of plays at the Lyceum, "The King and the Miller" is also excellently acted. Mr. Tyars is a royal Jamie, and gives forth his moral sentiments with a conviction that earns many a round of applause from a virtuous gallery: Miss Foster is a pretty Marion; and Mr. Sam Johnson—Mr. Irving's old companion in arms, helper, and counsellor at the Sunderland Theatre thirty years ago—gives a picture of the canny, crusty, humorous old Scots miller, Jock Huwieson, fully worthy of Coquelin or Got, or any "character actor" of past or present.

The Passion Play has been acted, for the first time this year, at Ober Ammergau, before the usual audience of reverential peasants and curious Britons. Changes are reported, and not for the better; satins and plush have taken the place of the plainer (and more correct) dresses of earlier decades—imagine a plush Pilate!—and it is said that the wayside peasant now wears his hair long and poses. Nevertheless, it must be a wonderful sight—play, actors, and audience: like nothing that we know in modern Europe, and yet with a certain likeness, in all its difference, to that other half-religious festival at ultra-modern Bayreuth.

Paris is not to be without its Ibsen. "Les Revenants"—a more correct translation than "Ghosts," by the way—are shortly to be seen at the Théâtre Libre. Why does not some enterprising Londoner form a little club, and give a week of private performances: "Ghosts," the "Thérèse Raquin" of Zola, and, let us say, the "Duchess of Malfi," would make three capital programmes. And the name of the club—if a name it must have—should surely be "The Horrors."

Intending dramatists will kindly note that Mrs. Hodgson Burnett is said to have made £17,000 out of the American performances alone of her play of "Little Lord Fauntleroy." British playwrights please copy.

The hero of Mr. H. A. Jones's brilliantly successful "Judah" will shortly add to his already remarkable list of nationalities. A Dutch Welsh Jewish Protestant parson will be seen when the play is acted at Rotterdam. "All rights for Holland" in the new piece have been secured by the energetic Mr. J. T. Grein. And Mr. F. Horner is writing a burlesque of it to be called "Doodah"!

Mr. Beerbohm Tree is certainly giving his patrons a good thing in Mr. Gilbert's "Comedy and Tragedy," which is now nightly to precede "A Village Priest" at the Haymarket, with Miss Julia Neilson as the heroine. Yet is not this almost too much of a good thing? There are five acts of that "Priest"—and five acts of intense and absorbing interest; and the weather has been very fine and warm lately!

A funny little farce, with a touch of burlesque in it, is "Adoption," produced at Toole's Theatre before a rollicking Whit-Monday audience by the saturnine "Richard" and the jovial "Henry." There was a cheery defiance of probability about it which not only chimed in with the holiday humour of the spectators, but led up most artistically to the fantastic revelries of "The Bungalow." And, strange to say, there was absolutely too little of the new play; the audience could well have borne more than their twenty minutes of capital acted farce.

Mr. Ben Greet gives an interesting *matinée* at the Vaudeville next Thursday, when "A Cavalier Incident," by A. H. and A. M. Hodgson—sexes indistinguishable on the programme—a new and original one-act play by Louis N. Parker—who is obviously masculine—and one of Mr. Julian Sturgis's pretty dialogues are to be performed. "In Olden Days," "A Buried Talent," and "Picking up the Pieces" are the names of Incident, Play, and Dialogue respectively.

"The Anonymous Letter" is again postponed, this time till June 12, and Miss Lottie Venne is to play Miss Farren's part.

Miss Marion Terry will appear on the 27th of June in Mr. A. C. Calmour's new "dramatic fancy," called "Cyrene." This play, we are assured on the best authority, is to be its author's masterpiece.

The recitals given at the Princes' Hall by Miss Amy Roselle and Mr. Arthur Dacre on two successive Tuesdays have had the ill-luck to clash with the productions at *matinées* of no less than five new plays—three big and two little. Nevertheless, they have attracted—and interested—audiences whose hearty applause has been of the best augury for the provincial tour which Mr. and Mrs. Dacre are said to contemplate. These recitals are not confined merely to "recitations" in the usual sense: whole scenes and even complete plays—or, to be more exact, dramatic sketches complete as far as they go—are comprised within the two hours of the entertainment. An authoress not unaccustomed to stage work, Mrs. Hugh Bell, has written a bright little playlet for the accomplished pair: and, though the consummate stagecraft of Miss Roselle is known to all playgoers, there are perhaps not a few to whom her husband's true and unforced sense of humour was something of a surprise.

A puzzle in three acts, by Mr. J. H. Darnley, was produced at Terry's Theatre on Wednesday afternoon. It was called "Wanted, a Wife," and received with uproarious laughter; but what was the connection of whom with which, and who went where, or why he went there when he did, hardly one of that laughing audience seemed to have the glimmering of an idea. However, the piece was sufficiently well played by Messrs. Arthur Williams, Yorke Stephens, and a dozen worthy (if sometimes somewhat boisterous) coadjutors; and if you are amused why need you understand? (Which you didn't.)

FOREIGN NOTES.

The director of the Dresden Conservatorium, Dr. Heinrich Pudor, has issued a report of the thirty-fourth year of the work of the institution. The remarks of the director himself are extremely plain and thorough. He wishes the institution to be distinctly devoted to the

teaching of German music and of vocal music as executed on German principles. He strongly disapproves the teaching of Italian opera-airs and of pieces selected from the operas of Meyerbeer. Indeed his disapproval of Italian airs is carried to such an extent that one lady-professor of singing has had to send in her resignation, and has had it accepted, because she persists in teaching her pupils to sing such airs as Dr. Pudor condemns. It will be interesting henceforth to watch the career of pupils educated at the Dresden schools, especially of the vocal pupils.

Herr Xaver Scharwenka, who is known to have been engaged on an opera, has had some selections from it performed privately before a select audience of invited guests. It is called "Mataswintha," and the solo parts were sung by Fräulein Friede and Asmann, Herren Zarnekow and v. der Milde; with a chorus and piano accompaniment. So far as could be judged from the performance, the second act promises to contain many beautiful and striking passages.

Wagner's birthday (May 22) was celebrated at Mannheim by a performance, without any cuts, of "Die Götterdämmerung," under the able and energetic conductorship of Herr F. Weingartner. This is to be followed up by a performance of the entire "Ring," also without any cuts, on the 7th, 8th, 11th, and 15th June.

The operatic and theatrical season at St. Petersburg which has just terminated has not been, on the whole, very successful. Rubinstein's opera, "Gorischka," the only novelty, has drawn most money, but artistically is not very highly valued. Tchaikowsky's new ballet at the Marie Theatre, "The Sleeping Beauty," is the next greatest success, and the music is considered worthy of the composer at his best. The appearances of M. Rubinstein and of Mme. Sembrich have found their usual appreciation.

Mme. Marcella Sembrich has begun an engagement of some duration at Kroll's Theatre at Berlin. Thus far she has appeared in "La Fille du Régiment," "Sonnambula," and "Traviata," and, as usual, with enormous success both as actress and singer.

Arrigo Boito has accepted the post of Director of the Conservatorio of Parma for so long as his friend Faccio (who was appointed to the post, but owing to his unhappy illness has never been able to enter on his duties) shall be unable to fill the place.

"La Basoche," the new opera of M. André Messager (libretto by M. Albert Carré), was to be produced at the Paris Opéra Comique on the 29th ult.

In Victor E. Nessler, who died at Strasburg on the morning of the 28th of May, Germany loses one of her most popular, but not one of her best composers. Born near Schlettstadt, in Alsace, January 28, 1841, Nessler betook himself to music rather than theology, and soon became a well-known figure in the musical circles of Leipzig. Although producing several operas, both great and small, he was for many years better known by his songs and male-voice quartettes. At length, in 1879, he produced the five-act opera "Der Rattenfänger v. Hameln," which quickly made its way to every town in Germany. An English version by Mr. H. Hersee was produced at Covent Garden in January, 1884, with Mr. James Sauvage and Madame Rose Hersee in the chief parts, but it had no particular success and has not been repeated. The composer's next opera, "Der wilde Jäger" (1881) was a comparative failure, but after that, in 1884, came the "Trompeter v. Sakkingen," which fully equalled—perhaps surpassed—the popularity of the "Ratcatcher." This was Nessler's last thorough success, for his subsequent operas, "Otto der Schütz" (1886) and "Die Rose v. Strasburg," produced only a few weeks ago, have made but little mark. Besides his operas he wrote several choral cantatas and comic songs and part-songs, many of which are very popular. His best operas are of the *opéra-comique* class, but on the whole decidedly inferior to the average French specimens of the same class; and it is hardly to be supposed that their popularity will be very permanent.

The Organ World.

FIFTY ORGAN RECITALS.

That it should be possible to collect programmes of fifty organ recitals given in and near London during the comparatively short space of one month is sufficient proof, were such needed, of the increasing popularity of this form of musical art. It would appear, moreover, that as a rule the attendances on these occasions were large, especially in districts chiefly inhabited by the less cultured, and therefore the "organ recital"—which title is not altogether satisfactory, since vocal and even chamber music is often included—has become one of the means by which artistic principles may be diffused. Remembering the associations which still cling round the true "organ" tone, the style of music to which the instrument most effectively lends itself, and the musicianly training which most of its executants have received, it is surely not too much to expect that the music performed at these recitals should be more intellectual than trivial, and that on these occasions musical art should be recognised as a refining and elevating power. Let us, therefore, see what these fifty programmes tell us. They contain 372 pieces, exclusive of vocal and concerted additions, of which 225 are organ pieces, i.e., pieces professedly composed for the instrument, the remaining 147 being "organ arrangements." Now, although the percentage of "arrangements" is larger than could be wished, the great proportion of organ music properly so called is most satisfactory, as showing an appreciation of the genius of the organ. This cause for satisfaction becomes still greater when it is remembered that the organ-recital is of comparatively very recent introduction, and for some considerable time there was a great scarcity of effective original organ music. It is, indeed, a somewhat strange fact that the earliest efforts to provide a *répertoire* of music for the organ was almost wholly directed to arranging vocal and instrumental scores. Doubtless much of this was due to the narrow meaning attached to that vague term "sacred music," no other kind being admissible for performance in church, and from their contrapuntal character and popularity it is easy to see why choruses from Handel's oratorios should be among the first published arrangements, and remain for a long period in favour with organists; but, still, when we consider the long series of brilliant organists England has produced, many of whom hold a foremost place as composers, it is a disappointment to the modern organist who loves his instrument to find how little really fine organ music his predecessors have bequeathed him. John Blow, Pelham Humphreys, Michael Wise, Henry Purcell—all celebrated organists in their day—and many others, developed and perfected the Anglican Chant and the verse anthem, leaving a collection of which we should be proud; but for the organ they wrote little or nothing. The instruments at that time were imperfect in many important particulars, and the resources to secure effect were extremely limited; but the chief character of the organ, viz., diapason tone, and power to accentuate rhythm, was there then as now. Besides, the addition of German inventions and general improvements did not produce a corresponding increase of organ pieces by contemporary writers. And the same story is repeated to-day. The organ is neglected by our great composers. Organ builders have developed a magnificent instrument, an instrument of unparalleled power, beauty, and variety of tone, and marvellous resource. Composers have approved and written testimonials glowing with laudatory adjectives, but gone elsewhere for means to portray their noblest thoughts. Thus there is much to justify the "organ arrangement." The organist who is an artist is conscious of the beauty and depth of many fine vocal and instrumental compositions; he knows too how the melodies and movements are cherished by his congregation, he has to make his recital pleasing and acceptable, and he finds the great masters have not provided his instrument with works of corresponding beauty and favour. Thus his own inclinations, the preference of his audience, and the manifold capabilities of his instrument, all press him to try and reproduce these master-works. Popular, and it must be confessed often artistic success, crowns his efforts, and so the thin end of the wedge of servile imitation is introduced. Once admit "effectiveness" in justification of "transcriptions" and the organ is entirely at the mercy of the artistic intuition of its performer. Now, strange though it may appear, the organist is apparently not always the most conversant with the idiosyncrasies of his instrument.

To return: analysing these 147 organ arrangements more closely, eighty-six are found to be from the scores of the great masters, while twenty-three are arrangements of vocal music. Of these latter, five only are Handel's choruses, the "Hallelujah Chorus" occurring but once. Four of Handel's concertos were played, the second one twice, a like honour being conferred on the overture to the "Occasional Oratorio," the overtures to "Samson" and "Solomon" being played once each. It may be remarked in passing that the small number of Handel's works thus laid under contribution would seem to afford another proof of the decadence of Handel's popularity in this country. The remaining items are: twenty-four arrangements of pianoforte pieces, three from Rossini's works, Wagner's "Good Friday Music," and the March from "Tannhäuser." Although it is satisfactory to find that the larger proportion of arrangements consist of great orchestral works, several of the subjects selected for transcription show a disregard of the genius of the organ that must either arise from ignorance or want of artistic perception. Such, for instance, is Handel's "Harmonious Blacksmith," the effect of the rapid scale passages in the bass of the last page of which must certainly have startled even the least attentive listener. No. 3 of Book 4 of Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" must also have astonished any pianist present at that recital; and it is to be feared the nervous sensibilities of Chopin, had he been present, would have been somewhat agitated by the "transcription" of his Polonaise in A. The performance, too, of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody in F must have had a decided "stimulating" effect! One programme—it is to be presumed purposely—is made up entirely of pianoforte works, and includes pieces by Schumann, Chopin, Grieg, and Moszkowski. In one respect, of course, arrangements of pianoforte pieces have an advantage over those of orchestral ones: the former impart a warmth by variety of tonal colour which no piano can produce, while the latter can only reproduce the "glow" of the orchestra in a very minor degree. From an artistic point of view each is equally objectionable, but in the one case there is increase in the other a decrease of charm. The continuance of the organ tone can, it is true, be utilised to "bring out" a sustained melody in the pianoforte piece, but neither the increased richness of tone nor the sustaining power of the organ atones for the loss of the sympathetic touch of the pianoforte key-board; and thus, while many pianoforte pieces gain breadth and variety when played on the organ, they lose that delicacy and sympathetic quality which form their greatest charm. The difference in the genius of the two instruments is emphasized by the fact that much pianoforte music cannot be played on the organ at all, and most with only ludicrous effect.

Turning to the more congenial analysis of the 225 original organ pieces, we find eighty-two contributed by English composers, seventy-four by French, sixty-six by German, and seven by Italian. It is eminently satisfactory to see Englishmen head this list, for it may fairly be said no country has a greater number of accomplished musicians who have devoted a considerable portion of their lives to the study of the instrument; but the margin is too narrow to admit of much congratulation. We have no organist-composer to place by the side of Guilmant, whose brilliant organ works were performed twenty-six times in the month under notice. Henry Smart's compositions come nearest, being chosen sixteen times, his March in D being repeated four times. There is cause for congratulation however, in the other French composers chosen. Wely is only represented by five performances, and Batiste by a similar number, three of the latter, however, being repetitions of the "famous Andante in G," which, with its melody played on a "shaky quaky" vox humana, envied by the delirious gambols of the flute, will doubtless be familiar to all. Lemmens also is oddly represented by eight performances of his "Fan-far" and one of "The Storm," while the name of Widor occurs but four times.

Of the eighty-two organ pieces by English composers, sixteen are contributed by the late Henry Smart, and the remaining sixty-six by various writers. The generality, however, of these latter pieces are of a weak description. Walter Spinney's "Vesper Bell series," which would seem to enjoy much popularity, occurs fourteen times. The style of these pieces may be gathered from their titles, "Berceuse," "Harvest Song," "Daybreak in B flat"—doubtless pleasing compositions, but making no pretensions to elevation, and this criticism may be applied with a few exceptions to the other pieces by English composers. They are, as a rule, pretty and full of amiable melody, but as innocent of deep feeling as a child. Are our organists all so well provided for that their music reflects so much feeble complacency, or, when grandeur is attempted, mere ostentation? or is it that light and trivial music circulates more rapidly than worthier art?

Of the sixty-one German organ pieces twenty-nine are by Bach. Next in numerical order comes Mendelssohn, whose works were played as follows: first sonata, three times; second and third sonatas twice each; fourth and fifth sonatas, once; second fugue once. In all, ten renderings. Only four performances each of Rheinberger and Merkel were given, a fact that would seem to point to a want of knowledge of these composers. The remaining nineteen pieces are by miscellaneous German writers, such as Hesse, Raff, and others less known. Of the seven Italian pieces three are contributed by Capocci, whose works seem to be rapidly gaining the favour of organists.

With regard to the general arrangement of the programmes the rule would seem to be: Begin with an "offertoire" or "arrangement," place a fugue by Bach in the middle, and finish with a march. It would also seem to be the general impression that Bach should be followed by "something light," not to say "trivial," but whether or no this is complimentary to Bach's genius or the reverse is open to argument. Although the general juxtaposition of pieces indicates artistic perception of contrast, in one or two instances the arrangement of the items must have proceeded from a distorted view of the "fitness of things." The "Gavotte from 'Mignon'" can scarcely be called a happy subject for performance on the organ, but to follow it by Chopin's Funeral March could only have the effect of burlesque. Thus, while there is undoubtedly much cause for congratulation in the progress made, it would seem there is need of still further improvement, and that, subsequent to the general erection of organs in concert-rooms and the wider views held with regard to performances in churches, organ recitals are going through a phase of transition in which considerable responsibility is laid on all who manipulate the king of instruments.

NOTES.

A fine new organ has been built by Messrs. Brindley and Foster in the hall of the Duke of Sutherland's residence, Stafford House. The instrument contains sundry improvements—such as a number of interchangeable pistons, whereby combinations may be registered or prepared without interference with the independent use of the stops, and an interchange of registers from manual to manual, being what the builders call their "Metechotic" system. This excellent instrument has three manuals and pedal, and is tubular pneumatic throughout.

Whitsunday was celebrated in many churches by the performance of portions of oratorios. The "Redemption" was performed at St. Stephen's, South Kensington; and at St. Nicholas Cole Abbey admirable performances were given of Wesley's "Wilderness" and Mendelssohn's "Hear my prayer."

Holy Trinity, Brompton, announces a selection from the "Messiah" at 3:30 p.m. on the 8th inst. (Hospital Sunday), an admirable idea that might be largely adopted with beneficent results to the Hospital Funds.

CLAVICULAR v. ABDOMINAL BREATHING.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: It is useless to continue this controversy, inasmuch as Mr. Richardson and I are never likely to convert each other. It is, moreover, impossible to argue with a gentleman who flouts "the mere opinions of even the best musical and medical authorities;" and whose "special" experience of people with "abnormal" noses completely handicaps me. I am, I admit, not one to accept with undoubting faith and awe the dicta of all medical men, whose opinions are too often the result of theories, or of all musical people, who in nineteen cases out of twenty are unable to explain intelligently the phrases they have learnt mechanically, and which they repeat parrot-like to their pupils. But there are exceptions, and when we find that their views are founded on the Laws of Nature, then it is only reasonable to listen with deference and attention to what they seem to tell us.

The point of both my previous letters rests in one word, and that word, with the system depending upon it—a system founded upon Nature—Mr.

Richardson has avoided touching upon; and it is not my business to indicate that word.

Yours faithfully, RUFERT GARRY.
49, Torrington-square, W.C.,
May 19, 1890.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

Bizet's "I Pescatori di Perle" was presented on Thursday of last week in a way altogether worthy of a better opera and a better audience. It may now be accepted as a proven fact that nothing will ever make this work generally attractive, in spite of the plentiful evidence that it is written by the composer of "Carmen." However, so long as Mr. Harris chooses to put it forward it is well that it should be given as excellent a performance as that of last week. Miss Ella Russell as Leila, a part which she has made her own, and which few will wish to take from her, sang with great brilliance; but the chief interest of the performance undoubtedly lay in the Nadir of Signor Valero, who had previously made his *début* in "Carmen." The new-comer—a Spaniard—has a voice of good quality, although somewhat marred by "nasality;" but the fervour of his acting more than makes amends. M. Dufrique sang and acted well as Zurga, and, barring occasionally faulty intonation on the part of the chorus, the whole performance, under Signor Mancinelli, was very satisfactory.

The first appearance of Miss Macintyre in the part of Elsa was made on Friday. Those who have watched the, as yet, brief but brilliant career of this young lady were naturally curious as to the measure of success with which she would essay the interpretation of so trying a character; and it was therefore with pleasure that they found in her performance the promise of a high degree of future excellence. A very pardonable nervousness was unfortunately operative in the earlier scenes, but later on Miss Macintyre acted with great charm and sympathy. That she sang beautifully may be readily believed, and it is quite obvious that before long she will be entitled to rank as one of the best Elsas on the stage. The Ortrud was Madame Fürsch-Madi, than whom there is no more subtle or dramatic exponent of the part; and words would be wasted in reiterating the splendid performances of M. Jean de Reszke as the Knight of the Grail, of his brother as the King, or of Signor D'Andrade as Frederick. Signor Mancinelli conducted admirably.

The comparatively thin house which assembled on Saturday may be taken as satisfactory evidence of the failing attractions of "Trovatore." We shall hardly be expected to regret this, except for the reason that Madame Tetrizzini, the new Leonora, was scarcely seen under such favourable circumstances as she might fairly have wished for, the nervousness natural on such an occasion being thereby increased. Indeed, it would be scarcely fair to offer criticism of the lady's performance, which is more proper to the consideration of "Les Huguenots," in which on Tuesday she made her second appearance. It should be noted, however, that Signor Rawner, another *débutant*, appeared in the chief rôle. His voice is thin and unsympathetic, although his upper register contains some effective notes. He made the success aimed at by all tenors in "Di quella pira." Signor F. D'Andrade was a good Conte di Luna, and other parts were filled by Mme. Scalchi, Mme. Bauermeister, and Signori Darvall and Rinaldini.

Meyerbeer's opera afforded another and a better opportunity of judging the capacities of Madame Tetrizzini, as well as those of M. Ybos, a new tenor, who made his *début* as Raoul. Both singers are grievously afflicted with the *vibrato*, but both are excellent actors, and possess voices of good quality. The lady in especial sings with an altogether rare amount of dramatic expression; so much so, indeed, that with the effects of her *vibrato* superadded she went near to spoiling the plastic beauty of many parts of the Meyerbeerian "melos." The great duet in the fourth act was very finely done, both artists showing complete comprehension of the psychological developments of the situation; but even here the beauty of the famous melody in G flat was marred by excessive emotion on the part of the tenor, the tune being at first scarcely recognisable. Over-realism of expression is as disastrous in the vocal as in any other art. The Marcel of M. Edouard de Reszke and the Nevers of Signor D'Andrade are happily familiar, while Miss Ella Russell sang brilliantly as the Queen, and Madame Scalchi was herself as Urbano. M. Dufrique, as St. Bris, sang in highly artistic fashion, and the chorus and *mise en scène* were entirely adequate. Signor Bevignani conducted excellently.

REVIEWS.

From Boosey and Co.

"Andenken" (I think of Thee), song, words by F. von Matthiessen; English version by Marion Haig; music by Erica M. Robertson. A very simple yet attractive song, suitable to almost any kind of voice, and with a well-arranged accompaniment. Though easy it will require an expressive style of singing.

From Jos. Williams.

"Aus der Jugendzeit," "Youthful Days," 10 Kleine Klaverstücke, by Theodor Kirchner, Op. 88. These charming little pieces are each and all short, interesting, and original, both in melody and rhythm. They are easy to execute, but require dainty and intelligent phrasing, and will be particularly acceptable to those players who are tired of conventional melodies conventionally treated.

"Impromptu" for Piano by Hamilton Robinson. The tender theme is accompanied by arpeggios divided between the two hands, the harmonies of the suggested chords being particularly rich and suitable.

From Forsyth and Co.

"Danse de Ballet" and "Bourrée in C," for the Piano. By Caroline Lowthian. Among sparkling, short, light pieces these two show more distinctiveness of character than is usually found in the old-world style of dances by modern writers. Both are quaint and tuneful.

Four Easy Pianoforte Pieces entitled, "A little song without words," "A Graceful Dance," "Marche Petite," and "Danse Antique," by Edmund Rogers, are all pleasing and written with taste and refinement, the two last-mentioned having more individuality than the others.

NOTES FROM ITALY.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ROME, MAY 23, 1890.

The "Concorso Sonzogno" has excited great interest in Rome among lovers of opera. Signor Sonzogno offered a prize of 3,000 francs for the best original opera in one act; and seventy-three competitors sent in their works. Of these only three were chosen by the judges of the "Concorso" as fulfilling the terms of the competition; most of the candidates erred in choosing a plot which needed more than one act in order to develop its dramatic incidents sufficiently, whereas the conditions stringently limited each to one act and, if necessary, two tableaux. Among the three chosen (one of which was "Labilia," mentioned in a former letter), the prize has been awarded during the past week to an operetta, "Cavalleria rusticana," by a young and hitherto quite unknown composer, Professor Mascagni, from Cerignola, a little village near the Apennines. The first performance took place on Monday last, and created quite a sensation at the Costanzi Theatre; Madame Bellincioni and Signor Stagno again gave their aid to the performance, as in the case of "Labilia." Nearly every portion of the work was encored, and Mascagni is for the moment famous (whatever his future may be). At the third performance the public presented him with a golden crown, and, in addition to the prize and other pecuniary remuneration connected with it, he is commissioned by Sonzogno to write an opera in four acts, and in short has every chance of a brilliant future. It is said that since the young composer has become famous he has had many offers of libretti for future operas. One of these is particularly ambitious; the plot is historical, the title being "Il Risorgimento Italiano," and among the rôles would be Vittorio Emanuele (tenor), Garibaldi (baritone), and Cavour (bass). They "would" be, but are not likely to be, at least in the music of Professor Mascagni, who has declined the arduous task of *leit-motiving* these political heroes.

Madame Virginia Zucchi is still charming every one by her dancing at the Quirino, where, after many performances of "Brahma," she is now creating a *furor* in another ballet, "Esmeralda," an adaptation from the work of Victor Hugo. "The dancing of Virginia Zucchi is poetry and drama in itself," the critics say, and she interprets the poetical creation of the French poet with rare artistic comprehension.

The last concert for this season of the Roman Orchestral Society, conducted by Pinelli, took place last Thursday. Wagner's "Waldweben" was encored, and the concert closed with the Wedding March from Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream."

CONCERTS.

LONDON AND SUBURBAN.

**** Concert-givers are requested to notice that, owing to the heavy demands made on the staff during the season, no concerts can be noticed unless tickets are sent to the Editor of the MUSICAL WORLD (396, Strand) at least four days in advance of the advertised date.**

The last Philharmonic Concert was without doubt the most interesting yet given this season, for it commenced with the noble "Tragic" overture of Brahms—a work which some may consider more deserving of the first than of the second epithet here applied; it included Beethoven's Symphony in D and a new work by Mr. Frederic Cliffe, besides the performances of Madame Sophie Menter and Madame Nordica. The impression created by Mr. Cliffe's Symphony—perhaps the most remarkable "Op. 1" in musical history—was so deep that those who were on its appearance compelled to acknowledge its power were naturally anxious to see how far its successor would fulfil the early promise. It is hard, we confess, to say precisely to what extent the new orchestral picture, "Cloud and Sunshine," does this. The work—written, it may be observed, in extended overture form—presents, though by means of no definite programme, the changing vicissitudes of human life which have served artists of all kinds for much of their subject matter. We fancy that in the present instance it would have been better for Mr. Cliffe had he worked on some more clearly-marked lines. Taken in the mass, the alternations of good and ill are somewhat too extensive for convenient treatment in an overture, and it is probable that the thematic material of Mr. Cliffe's work would have been more significant and sincere if the emotion by which he was inspired had been more clearly defined. However, it can be said that the work,

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this aside, is of great strength; it attains, in the impressive *large*, power and grandeur without any sacrifice of beauty. The design is clearly and firmly traced; the orchestral colour and contrast are admirable, and there is throughout a freedom of polyphonic writing remarkable in so young a man. In short, the work is well worthy of the hand which wrote the Symphony in C, and the mastery over forms of musical expression herein shown is so complete that it is safe to hope that when Mr. Cliffe finds a subject of sufficient intensity he will give us a work of the greatest value. It should be added that the "picture," excellently rendered under Mr. Cowen's direction, was warmly received, the composer being twice called to the platform. Madame Menter chose to be heard in Weber's Concert-stuck, of which she gave a fine reading, although we are scarcely able to approve of the alterations which she made in the text; and a phenomenally brilliant one of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody in E, in which her familiarly perfect *technique* was used as the interpreter of a larger share of restrained emotion than is often the case with this artist. Madame Menter has, in a word, lately found a heart. Madame Nordica sang Beethoven's "Ah! Perfido" very beautifully, the recitative and the second part of the aria being much better than the middle portion; but she was less successful in "Elizabeth's Prayer" from "Tannhäuser," in which she scarcely realised with fulness the agonised spirit of the music. The rest of the programme was made up of Beethoven's Symphony in D, and Gade's graceful, but comparatively unimportant "Nordische Semifahrt" overture, both of which were—as was also the Brahms' overture—admirably played by Mr. Cowen's band.

Madame Carreño's second recital took place in St. James's Hall on Thursday afternoon of last week, when, eschewing almost entirely the *genre* of music in which she shines with such particular brilliance, she chose to be heard as the exponent of such classical pieces as Schumann's "Etudes Symphoniques," Handel's "Harmonious Blacksmith," and Beethoven's "Andante Favori." It is pleasant to record that in these Madame Carreño displayed qualities which were not so plainly visible on a former occasion. The Schumann studies were

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as a whole excellently rendered, No. 10 receiving an especially beautiful interpretation, while the firmness and solidity with which the last of the series was given was not less noticeable. Very poetic readings of the Andante and of Chopin's Nocturne were offered, and a great deal of elegant fancy was introduced into Boccherini's Minuet and Hiller's "Zur Guitarre." Chopin's Ballade in A flat and Rubinstein's "Valse Caprice" fared less fortunately; but in Henselt's "Si oiseau j'étais" and her own graceful Intermezzo the highest technical merits of Madame Carreño's style were well shown.

An evening concert was given on Friday of last week in the Kensington Town Hall on behalf of whom or what we are unable to say. At any rate, there was no lack of good music, inasmuch as among the artists announced were Miss Alice Gomes, Miss Eleanor Rees, Mr. Piercy, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Foli. Of these Miss Rees made a great success with Wadham's attractive song "Come to Me," which she gave with great expression; while Mr. Piercy and Mr. Oswald were not less happy in Blumenthal's "An Evening Song" and Hatton's "To Anthea." Moreover, Mr. B. H. Grove's fine voice was heard in Handel's "Sorge infausta," while Miss Jeanne Douste and Mr. Hollman joined in an excellent performance of Rubinstein's Sonata in D, each artist in addition giving excellent solos on their respective instruments. The accompanists were Mr. Fountain Meen and Mr. Wilfred Bendall.

Mr. Pierre-René Hirsch, who gave a recital in Princes' Hall on Wednesday afternoon, is decidedly above the average merit as a pianist, his excellencies being chiefly displayed in the compositions of Liszt, which he renders in a very picturesque and dramatic manner. Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, arranged, or, should we say crowded with difficulties by Liszt, and Bach's Prelude and Fugue in F sharp minor, were played with due dignity and breadth of phrasing. Mr. Hirsch's left hand octave-passages were wonderfully clear, and his shakes particularly rapid and even. The works of Chopin do not seem to suit Mr. Hirsch so well; the Berceuse was given with taste and delicacy, but in the Grande Polonaise in A flat the *rubato* effects were very capriciously introduced. The rest of the programme called for no special comment if we except two of Schumann's novelettes, which were very well and expressively played. The concert concluded with two more of Liszt's pieces, which were also given with great vigour and power.

Those excellent young artists who form the body entitled The Musical Guild gave their first concert for this, their third season, at the Kensington Town Hall on Wednesday, the 28th inst. These local concerts do very great good, and so far from wishing to see them brought more into the centre of London, we should like to see them multiplied in every suburb. On the present occasion the concert began with Schumann's piano Quartett in E flat, of which the rendering would have been excellent had the string players been able to hold their own against the too powerful tones of the piano. Schumann's "Märchen-zählungen" for clarinet, viola, and piano were very tenderly given, the third in particular being admirably played. Miss Margaret Jenkins showed much feeling and appreciation of Chopin's Fantasia in F minor, but her executive powers are not yet sufficiently developed to enable her to do justice to the brilliant passages of the work. Mr. D. Price sang a sufficiently feeble song of Gounod's, which was not at all well suited to his style, but afterwards made some atonement by singing Handel's noble and most unjustly neglected air from the Occasional Oratorio, "His sceptre is a rod of righteousness." Mr. Price's style does not do justice to his voice, and he is in some danger of being spoilt. A spirited performance of Beethoven's Septett concluded the concert. Where there are fifteen performers it is impossible for us to mention them all: we must content ourselves with saying that in all the concerted pieces the *ensemble* was such as to do the greatest credit to the intelligence and feeling of the performers and the excellence of their training. The audience was much larger than generally assembled last year, and we hope the people of Kensington are learning to appreciate the blessings they may enjoy.

The first of a series of four concerts was given in the Princes' Hall on Wednesday evening by Messrs. Ludwig and Whitehouse, who then received the assistance of Mr. G. Collins, Alfred Gibson, Miss Zimmermann, and Miss Fillunger. The programme opened with Sgambati's Quintett in B flat, which was heard at one of the Popular Concerts of the past

series. It was played with excellent effect by the instrumentalists above named, Miss Zimmermann distinguishing herself here, as in her other efforts, by the delicacy and sympathy of her playing. Spohr's "Dramatic" concerto was given—less happily—by Mr. Ludwig, but a highly expressive reading of "Schumann's Allegro for 'cello and piano" was offered by Miss Zimmermann and Mr. Whitehouse. Beethoven's Quartet in F major (Op. 59, No. 1) was equally well given, the second movement being played with particular point and precision. Miss Fillunger sang Schubert's "Young Nun" and two songs by Brahms with great feeling and refinement, the *pianissimo* passages in the latter being especially praiseworthy.

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May 25.	Senor Sarasate.
June 1.	Frederic Cliffe.
June 8.	Prof. Horkomer's "An Idyl."
June 15.	Fraulein Hermine Spies.
June 22.	Signorina Teresina Tua.
June 29.	Madame Marcella Sembrich.
July 6.	Madame Becker Gröndhal.
July 13.	Sir John Stainer.
July 20.	Madame Lillian Nordica.
July 27.	M. Jean de Reszke.
Aug. 3.	Charles Dibdin.
Aug. 10.	Joseph Hollman.
Aug. 17.	Madame Sarah Bernhardt.
Aug. 24.	Frau Amalie Materna.
Aug. 31.	Herr Van Dyck.
Sept. 7.	M. Johannes Wolff.
Sept. 14.	Madame Patey.
Sept. 21.	Mr. Arthur Oswald.
Sept. 28.	The Bayreuth Conductors.
Oct. 5.	Miss Rosalind F. Ellicott.
Oct. 12.	Dr. A. C. Mackenzie.
Oct. 19.	Dr. Bernhard Scholz.
Oct. 26.	Madame Patti-Nicolini.
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Nov. 16.	Arrigo Boito.
Nov. 23.	Mr. and Mrs. Henschel.
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Feb. 8.	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Feb. 15.	Miss Caroline Geisler-Schubert.
Feb. 22.	Browning's "Strafford."
Mar. 1.	Mr. Leslie Crotty.
Mar. 8.	Miss Marguerite Hall.
Mar. 15.	Mr. Hamish Mac Cunn.
Mar. 22.	The Late Dr. Wyld.
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